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A SURVEY OF LAYMEN'S UNDERSTANDINGS OF WORDS
COMMONLY USED IN CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

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the Faculty of the
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CHAPTER I

TWO TYPES OF VOCABULARY AT WORK

In a cubicle exactly like others located along the corridor, a department manager speaks: "Here's why I called you section chiefs here this morning. One of the Dayton reps got on the TWX last night about Odyssey. Nothing official. Houston still hasn't tipped its hand, but Hawes Aircraft leaked enough to help us get started. Hawes is concerned that prospective subs couldn't meet a deadline of the end of the month. Yesterday's Vostok put some more pressure on-- finally. The push is for the retros only. Solid motors have already passed qual tests. The program is pretty sure to escalate, so maybe we can get aboard this time. Joe here will head the proposal team. Bill will project engineer. We need quick input from Propulsion and Structures. Propulsion, you're going to have to interface with Power. As usual, the front office wants a briefing day after tomorrow, so get flip charts lined up by this afternoon. Logistics can do the art work tonight and tomorrow. I'll cover you all with an IDM till you can get AFSWAs written up. Joe, do you have anything general on the technical side before we get down to details?"

This brief monologue is not greatly different from what the same men might have heard from a chief petty officer during their military service-- something like: "Awright,

fall in at attention! At ease! OK, men, this compartment better be shipshape for tomorrow-- deck, bulkheads, sacks... spit 'n' polish. And this time, turn to on the piping of your blues. The old man is edgy about those VIP's from D.C. If we snafu, we've had it for week-end passes. Any questions?"

Jargon at Work

Both of these examples are probably as confusing to uninitiated ears as "pig Latin" was to very young schoolboys a generation back, or as mysterious as "carnival talk" when a fast-talking hawker wanted to assure that a prospective customer did not understand his conversation with an ally in some questionable enterprise. To be sure, slang is mixed into both the technical conference and the petty officer's exhortation to the troops, but in each there is also an evident shortcut and reliable form of communication-- among those who know the language. If the background should be examined for some of the uncommon words appearing in the office discussion, the origins would probably be found in a variety of evolutionary steps. The detailed discussions which the fictitious manager proposes will involve a host of strange-sounding words. Examination of these specialized terms would show that they have arisen as the joint product of need and creativity. Particular needs are accommodated by the ability of specialized words to reduce the likelihood of misunderstanding

and to save time which would be spent in the repeated explanation of more general terms. Many of the words will have entered the common vocabulary of the engineers through their common background training in engineering, but others will have arisen in the environment of "space age" technology (e.g., "retro" and "qual tests") and still others within the specific industrial organization (e.g., "IDM" for interdepartmental memorandum).

Even the terse words of the petty officer fail to bring out another feature of specialized language-- namely its power to draw persons together into a cohesive group where the special language is spoken-- or to exclude those who are not so informed. A seaman who refers to the stern of a ship as its rear, or has not yet learned that "pogie bait" is candy, is not really in the Navy in so far as either he or his fellow seamen are concerned! This situation suggests the uneasiness which any newcomer may have as he enters an environment in which many words sound unfamiliar, and attaches a personal value to vocabulary.

If for either example considered we ask, "Who knows the language?", we likely would receive the answer that everybody involved does, or soon will. Every person is aware without being told that he has a responsibility to learn the language being spoken where he works. And whether or not he is ever told of this responsibility, he eagerly seeks to

learn the medium of communication. Until he has cleared that hurdle, he cannot effectively participate in the joint effort which comprises most of the working day for most working people. But so practical a reason seldom comes to mind. There is simply the matter of pride in accomplishment, or of wanting to know the language which leads one to acquire a specialized vocabulary quickly. Even in his own mind, one does not belong to the group if he doesn't know the language, or jargon, or whatever one wants to call it. The uneasiness is real, though it might be temporary, and is the same uneasiness often exploited to the discomfort of newcomers in military schools and fraternal organizations-- perhaps also unwittingly as various groups address others beyond the members who can enjoy the privileged communication which knowledge of the jargon allows. Suffice it to say, in summary, that there is a great difference in the use of language to expedite or to solve, on the one hand, and to set up barriers of exclusiveness, on the other.

The Church and Its Vocabulary

How are matters of communications within the church? Most laymen would probably not comment extensively on any of the aspects thus far mentioned, but they would undoubtedly be vocal in pointing out that the church does use a cryptic vocabulary. Certainly some words and concepts which seem to

find sanctuary only in the atmosphere of church are confusing to the newcomers-- often to long-time members as well. Ironically, the language which is ascribed to the church is no more specialized than that found in almost any profession. Moreover, it is almost free of slang and abbreviations, to say nothing of the "acronoyms" which have become so popular in the present technological age (as, for example, "radar" is derived from "radio detecting and ranging"). However, even if a claim to simple language could be demonstrated, the church cannot irresponsibly speak what it has to say without concern for the results.

At least two major aspects of communications distinguish the church from many other groups. The first is one of mission, that the church is bound to the mission of participating in communications of the most intimate sort, not merely to edify its organizational members, but to bring men into some confrontation with God; not merely to teach or to proclaim, but to start processes and personal relationships about which Christianity is largely concerned. The second aspect deals with method, and is somewhat more easily demonstrated. Unlike that of the church, the jargon of other groups is largely denotative, words being used to denote rather specific objects or actions. (A ballpeen hammer has a particular shape, and "engine knock" can be easily detected and diagnosed by a person who is familiar with the technology of internal combustion

engines.) The language which the church uses is largely connotative, carrying implied or associated meanings in addition to the primary intention. The quotation from Proverbs 16:18; ^{**}"Pride goes before destruction", or Jesus' saying, "I am the bread of life" obviously have deep implications.

Church school teachers sometimes have good reason to chuckle when they hear the distortions of time-honored prayers, hymns and scriptural readings as repeated by small children. A great number of examples could be given from hymnody: "Gladly, the cross-eyed bear", "Lead on, O kinky turtle", "Rock the babies left for me",^{*} and others. The creeds are not immune, either, for "Poncho's pilot" makes regular appearances in the imaginations of today's children. The Lord's Prayer, ever a favorite with children, needs no further example than "Lead us not into Penn Station, but deliver us from eagles". Such occurrences (if they are in fact to be credited to children) have undoubtedly had their counterparts for centuries with youngsters throughout the world.

What of adults through the ages? Perhaps nothing more need be said than to borrow from a later chapter indicating

^{*}Which, translated, are: "Lead on, O King eternal", "Gladly the cross I'd bear" and "Rock of ages, cleft for me".

^{**}This and all later biblical references are from The Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

the state of the Lord's Prayer among church-going, well-educated adults who tested their own understanding of common words and concepts used regularly by themselves in public worship and private devotions. If the poorly understood portions are indicated by the word "blank", the result is generally as follows:

"Our Father who art in blank, blank be thy name.
Thy blank come. Thy blank be done, on earth as it
is in blank...."

But this result is relatively a model of clarity, as compared to the understanding which some groups have acknowledged for the Apostles' Creed, in which some of the basic creedal affirmations are found to be foreign to many persons' ears and to their understanding as well.

Serious discussion about the church's vocabulary often vents a considerable outburst of feeling and opinion. The comparatively well-informed are aware that the King James Version of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer are filled with words from the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries respectively, while the cultural views largely predate the first century A.D. Hymns include much nineteenth-century and earlier poetry. Alas, extensive usage of archaisms heard only in church expressions is often given as the reason for a growing failure of the church to attract and to nurture more persons. It is of no use to recall that business and industry also cling to some words from antiquity, for persons

seek something in the church that they do not find in their workaday lives.

The Church and Communications

Hendrik Kraemer has ably clarified the dual aspects of communications which the church must face: communication of a message between persons.¹ The mission of the church is not merely the transmission of biblical facts to persons, whether they be within the church or outside of it. It is the between-personal nature of communications that makes the problem a shared problem. Try as we might, communications cannot be accomplished from one side, no matter how clever that side might be. Thus not only the problem but its solution must be shared.

The concerned church must ask the question to what extent its communications is succeeding or failing. Somewhat to its present discomfort, the church has been concerned mainly with speaking to itself, and thus it seems appropriate to inquire first about the aspect of internal communications--by no means inclusively, but at least to start. Such inquiry is the objective of the present study: to investigate the question of communications through experimental sampling,

¹Hendrik Kraemer, The Communication of the Christian Faith (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 11.

with very little questioning and a considerable amount of listening; and to begin a placement of findings into some theological perspective-- that is to say, into a perspective which is governed by the particular way that God is viewed today-- with biblical teaching as the basic source for formulating such a view. The method is empirical in the respect of being based upon observation, without specific concern for existing theories or philosophical thought about "meaning" in its several usages. The presentation is attempted in terms which do not presuppose that the reader has specialized training in theology or philosophy or educational methods, but simply that he is concerned about the well-being of himself and persons around him.

Does the church have a specialized vocabulary? Is such a vocabulary needed? How comprehensible is the message which the church attempts to convey in words? What are some of the consequences? The remainder of this study considers these and related questions.

CHAPTER II

COMMUNICATIONS IN THE BIBLICAL RECORD

"So spoke youthful Elihu to Job: 'It is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand.'" (Job 32:8)

Even casual readers of the Bible usually perceive God to be presented as a God of power, who seeks to enter personal relationships with men. Throughout the Bible there is a dominance of thought on words and language; speaking and understanding; proclamation and interpretation. God is first to speak. In the opening verses of the book Genesis, he is represented as creating the universe by the power of his words-- " 'Let there be light'; and there was light." (Genesis 1:3) Then are created the divisions of the universe, the stars and planets, the sky, waters and dry land; the earth and its inhabitants-- all associated with the power of the spoken word. God speaks first, and out of primordial chaos an orderly world is formed.

In the Bible man, too, is created by God's spoken word, and immediately thereafter God speaks to this creature who is able to reply.* Language becomes a divine-human bond.

*It is intriguing to consider, as Georges Gusdorf² has suggested, that man became "human" only when he became able to communicate with another.

²Georges Gusdorf, La Parole (Speaking), trans. by Paul T. Borckelman (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965), p. 13.

Throughout the developing drama, from the garden scene presented in Genesis to the symbolic city in the book of Revelation, the word (or "the Word" in the New Testament) plays the central role of connecting God and man, and men to men. Indeed, the intimate relationships between God and his greatest living creation involve the exchange of words which lead to understanding and mutual commitment to the agreement reached. The relationships which God seeks with men are most solemnly enacted in the concept of covenantal, two-way agreements. Mutual understanding is essential to genuine agreement. After the ark survives the deluge, God signifies through the rainbow as his covenantal mark that he will never again destroy the earth's inhabitants by flood. Noah shows his sincerity by offering a sacrifice. God's covenant with Abraham is somewhat more specific, as it sets apart Israel from other nations, and each male is brought personally into the relationship with a mark of circumcision. Moses represents the nation Israel, and the basis of covenant between God and Israel is inscribed in stone as ten commandments.

The prophets-- Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others-- speak to men in God's name-- "Thus says the Lord"-- what they have been told by God, or have seen in visions. In Ezekiel's case, the vision appears as writing on a scroll. But the people are not always ready to listen-- the alien Pharaoh

because God "hardens his heart", others because the message calls for discipline or exceeds their understanding. In the reign of King Josiah, a book is ostensibly discovered in the temple money box, with a written code of law which the nation is charged thereafter to obey, becoming the "people of the book". Words take on a new meaning and the nation is never again without its holy scrolls.

Human Communication: Biblical Extremes

But words also bring man into conflict and confusion, as recorded in the story of the Tower of Babel. Whatever the reasons for its presence in Hebrew literature-- whether to explain the phenomenon of language or to show God as using so important a human device as language to punish man for human presumption to be godlike-- this tale stands as a reminder that the remarkable invention of language also has inherent limitations:

"Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and nothing they propose to do will not be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." (Genesis 11:1-9)

The strong implication is that God has introduced chaos, for the subsequent history recorded in the scriptures is largely about a divided people. Men of the same language-- those in close association using the same medium of word exchange-- can understand each other. But a fragmentation has occurred.

Prototype man has taken a second "fall" as he has sought to overreach his human limitations. After Babel, language differences will forestall man's efforts to usurp the place of God.

But as the Old Testament (the record of the Old Covenant) seems to stress the great difficulty of overcoming language divisions, the New Testament tells the dramatic story of a particular day of Pentecost when:

"they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying "are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language... And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" (Acts 2:1-12)

What, indeed, does this event at time of Pentecost mean? Babel to Pentecost... Old Testament to New Testament... old covenant to new-- certainly these themes have been popular discussions about communication of the Christian message. Utter, babbling confusion gives way to understanding, despite language differences. In contrast to the interposing of language barriers at Babel, God himself, through his Holy Spirit, enables persons from "every nation under heaven" to

understand each other and in turn to comprehend a remarkable message. This theme has, in fact, been used freely-- perhaps too freely-- in developing discourses on communications. But such usage needs to go beyond superficial dramatic impact. The Babel tale, for example, seems to have as its main intent an explanation of the observed fact that many languages were prevalent even in ancient times, and that these differences have always constituted serious barriers among men. Whatever moral the tale carries, it seeks to give reason for something observed in human experience.

A Communications Theme in the New Testament

Certain features of the narrative about Pentecost also arise out of the experience of the early church. Not only do men observe a new ability to convey the message brought by Jesus Christ, but they are assured of the continuing assistance of the Spirit of God. The Counselor whom Jesus promised would come has indeed done so. Simple men now begin to preach with boldness and clarity. Missionaries enter new regions with the assurance that problems of language can be overcome. The Pentecost experience brings pointedly to mind, and subsequent events continue to prove, what the Bible consistently emphasizes-- that the Holy Spirit is interpreter and modernizer of the divine message, and the source of effective communication of the gospel. (On this prominent theme the Bible contains many direct references, from the giving of both

message and skill to the prophets, to the preaching by Stephen and others and the revelation to John-- even to artistic ability in the working of metal and stones. (Exodus 31:3)

After this unusual Pentecost, men will be responsible for carrying to other men the good news that the Master's death and resurrection have brought human wholeness of a great new dimension. The use of words takes on deeper meaning. Judgment will be levied for their careless use. (Matthew 12:37) The Apostle Paul observed that "there are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning; but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me." (1 Corinthians 14:10-11) Moreover, the church is not freed completely from the curse of Babel, for it undergoes periodic oscillation between comprehension and misunderstanding. Even enthusiastic participation by the young churches in the remembrance of the eventful Pentecost should not go on if the "speaking in tongues" left the hearer unedified. It would be better to speak five words in order to instruct, than ten thousand in an unclear tongue. (1 Corinthians 14:19) But, while Paul stressed the importance of making the preaching clear (Colossians 4:4), he recognized that meaning can be transmitted in ways other than words (1 Thessalonians 1:5) and that even the clearest exposition cannot assure understanding. A later writer, in the Letter to the Hebrews,

echoed the words used by Paul, bluntly pointing out that not all hearers are capable of digesting the "solid food" of the doctrines that were evolving in a church which had not known the Master face to face. (1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12) The experience of the early church thus seems to be a mixture of clarity and confusion, and both Babel and Pentecost can serve as symbols in the ongoing mission.

But such a view is far too narrow unless it places the life and teachings of Jesus Christ in the center. Jesus, the person, is the central message in communicating the good news which his coming brought. The content of his spoken message is also important-- the words which he spoke and the ways in which he spoke them. Significantly, the early books of the New Testament have little to say about Christ as a prophet (although he was certainly that) or as priest (except, perhaps, at the Last Supper). The primary view is that of counselor and friend and teacher. The term "rabbi" (i.e., teacher) is often used when Jesus is addressed by his disciples and even by those who scarcely know him: lawyers, scribes and others. He went frequently to the synagogue and taught, and even instructed his disciples in post-resurrection appearances. The road between Jerusalem and Emmaus provides a memorable scene in which one of two travelers later comments, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32)

The theme of Jesus as teacher is prominent in the New Testament, yet there is confusion in our interpretation of even those of his statements which seem to be the simplest. We must look to the Bible for at least one example. This requires a brief excursus into some details of biblical criticism which, hopefully, will set the mood for other more pertinent discussions.

Parables: One Form of Gospel Expression

As Paul's ministry was coming to an end in Rome, some recollections about the Lord's teaching were being committed to writing-- perhaps earliest in the biblical book which is credited to Mark. Before a reader has moved far into Mark's account, or in those of Matthew or Luke, he is aware that much of the content of the Teacher's message is presented in the form of parables, a literary form which is familiar to us primarily through New Testament usage. As modern men seek to find the full meaning of these parables, it is interesting to wonder about their reception at the time when they were spoken. Their consistent use in the books of Matthew, Mark and Luke suggests that our Lord found parables very helpful in teaching a great cross-section of persons in his time. Yet, much academic controversy today is centered around the whole parabolic method, and the New Testament itself indicates a first-century concern of the same general sort. No better

illustration can be found than that presented in the fourth chapter of Mark*, the so-called Parable of the Sower (or Parable of Four Soils). This parable reflects the struggle for understanding within the early church, and is, coincidentally, the focus of much scholastic activity and controversy in our day. For the present discussion, this section of Mark is presented in four parts, which follow:

The narrative setting: (verses 1-2)

"Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he taught them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:"

The parable: (verses 3-8, with an admonition in verse 9)

"Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on rocky ground, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil; and when the sun rose it was scorched, and since it had no root it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns and the thorns grew and choked it, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." And he said, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'"

Narrative interlude: (verses 10-13)

"And when he was alone, those who were about him with the twelve asked him concerning the parables. And he said to them, 'To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables; so that they may indeed see but not

*Mark 4:1-20; also Matthew 13:1-23 and Luke 8:4-15.

perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand; lest they should turn again, and be forgiven.' And he said to them, 'Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?'"

Interpretation: (verses 14-20)

"The sower sows the word. And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown; when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word which is sown in them. And these in like manner are the ones sown upon rocky ground, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; and they have not root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. And others are the ones who hear the word, but the cares of the world, and the delight in riches, and the desire for other things, enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. But those that were sown upon the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." (Mark 4:1-10)

This is the example. Let us now look at some criticism of it.

Some Modern Views about Parables

A full summary and appraisal of the scholarly objections to this section of Mark would require skills which are beyond those of the present writer. Some wrestling with the problem is considered worthwhile, however, for it might help to illustrate concerns for the best possible interpretations of the Bible as scholars seek them. In brief, this illustration focuses upon the basic function of a parable. Whereas a parable is believed to be intended for conveying only one main point, the recorder of this particular parable

is judged by his critics to be guilty of extending the intent to an allegory which now appears in verses 14-20. (Key to the suspicion is the sudden appearance of "word", which is claimed by students of the New Testament to be much used by the early church, but rarely by the Lord. Eight appearances in this passage minimize its likelihood to escape detection!) Perhaps the most common critical interpretation at the present time can be very briefly paraphrased as denying that the parable has anything to do with human receptivity or understanding of the teachings of Jesus, but states merely that whoever labors in the service of God should not be overly concerned if each act does not bear fruit-- for the overall harvest will be rewarding. In this view, Mark is judged to be a victim of his environment within the early church, at whose doorstep is laid the responsibility for inserting verses 10-12 on the subject of understanding the message brought by Jesus Christ. The question is specifically that which is precipitated by the expression, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables."

But, despite an impressive quantity of work-- Rudolph Bultmann's incisive analytical work, Adolf Julicher's objection that it is "academic heresy to suggest any kind of allegorical and 'moral' interpretation", or Joachim Jeremias'

unwillingness to accept any general interpretation which might lurk in the Parables"³ or their interpretation (this being a portion coming from German scholarship alone), there is no resolution of the question of exactly what Jesus meant to convey in his teaching by parables. Each piece of scholarship makes its claim to know the one intended meaning. Presumably each must prove that its viewpoint is correct and all others incorrect. Emil Brunner is, by the standards of the so-called form critics, wrong when he states that the point of the soils is the idea of reception (four ways of encountering the word of God or four ways of making decisions about it-- not just four types of people who hear).⁴ (As these efforts have thus far not affected the man in the pew the issues might be likened to a high-level airplane "dog-fight" which might have occurred so far from the battlelines that the outcome was never learned. The total effort does, however, affect our views.)

G. V. Jones suggests that the parables must be considered less rigidly than the approaches just mentioned:

"there is a need to approach the parable more synthetically, imaginately, and comprehensively. The parables are, after all, a form of art, deeply rooted

³Geraint V. Jones, The Art and Truth of the Parables (London: SPCK, 1964), pp. ix-x.

⁴Emil Brunner, Sowing and Reaping, trans. Thomas Weiser (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 14.

in Hebrew art forms, and as the artistic imagination may be presumed to work in more or less the same way at all periods, it is, in my view, legitimate to bring to them a method of interpretation which seeks in them not only moral exhortation, historical judgment, or christological significance, or evangelical proclamation, but also disclosures, in particular images, of the general human condition..."⁵

Preference in Interpretations

Now, what of the population not included in the ranks of scholars? Perhaps the brief discussion of the single parable-- albeit on the question of understanding-- leaves the reader with some impatience about irreverent meddling with scriptures. More likely, there is no strong reaction of any sort. The actual situation is probably that many persons who are devoted to the Bible and read it regularly will have different interpretations of various passages (say for the Parable of the Sower) at various stages of their lives, quite apart from knowing that academic debate goes on through the years. We strongly encourage that Christians, exercising a fundamental responsibility, seek their own interpretations of scripture. It can well be so that such persons are closer to the truth intended by the original teller than a particular narrow interpretation.* Among the

⁵Jones, op. cit., p. x.

* John Calvin insisted (Book 1, Chapter IV of his "Institutes of the Christian Religion") "For as God alone is a sufficient witness of himself in his own word, so also

many interpretations held at various periods by this writer, for example, have been that concerned only with the final "harvest" and also an interpretation about the different types of hearers. Admittedly, recent considerations of problems in communications have brought out other possible interpretation which allow Mark's explanatory remarks (Mark 4:14-20) as authentic. The footpath can be considered the often-traveled line of argument (the "official" view, the orthodox, the nonheretical, the unprovocative), including that which insists on a single interpretation of the parable itself. Sprouting near the rock (whose residual warmth hastens sprouting) can be likened to the warm atmosphere of a friendly church, when the congregation is in a mood to hear many (or any) interpretations (including the hypothetically single correct one), but is unable to retain the content of the message after leaving the association of the congregation. The thorns suggest the many forces claiming one's attention away from biblical teaching, including strong insistence on a single never-changing interpretation.

As a concluding point on biblical teaching, we must remark that these suggestions are not made to belittle the work of scholars, but to recognize the fluidity of interpretation which exists beyond academic circles. Although the

the word will never gain credit in the hearts of men, till it be confirmed by the internal testimony of the Spirit."
(Underlining mine)

author's thinking would be completely unacceptable to an authority on the parables, the single-point interpretations of one scholar (to the exclusion of all other interpretations) is equally unacceptable to the author. We would rather (for there is personal choice involved) be influenced by the interpretations given in scriptures themselves than by some of the possibilities offered by the ever-increasing number of studies of the scriptures. Perhaps both sides to the issue should mark the words of Walter R. Bowie: "for the right interpretation of the parables there is needed an informed mind plus a disciplined imagination."⁶

On the more general theme of communications, it can be noted that this chapter which began with a recollection of straightforward scriptural statements has ended in a rather belabored comment about parables as a representative of teaching within the Bible. Such a pattern often typifies attempts at explaining any topic, and brings differing views into lively conflict. With this chapter viewed in retrospect, it would seem that the curse of Babel might have reasserted itself!

⁶Walter R. Bowie, The Teaching of Jesus III. The Parables Vol. 7 of The Interpreter's Bible. 12 vols.: New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 174.

CHAPTER III

SOME THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATIONS

"There are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that could be written." (John 21:25)

Such were the dimensions of the man who proved to be the turning point in history. Jesus Christ used both word and actions to convey the meaning of himself and his teachings. He came to bring to men a message which has been recognized as good news indeed, news which is summarily called-- from the Old English word godspel (meaning good tidings or good news)-- the gospel of Jesus Christ. The New Testament presents several perspectives of what the gospel can mean to men, included in the narratives and quotations of the first four New Testament books-- significantly also called Gospels-- through the interpretative letters from St. Paul and other writers, to the symbolic disclosures in the book of Revelation. It would be presumptuous here to attempt an unequivocal paraphrase of these writings. But silence does not help, either, and words must be called upon to describe the framework of this singular message.

The New Testament Message of Salvation

To be faithful to the teachings of the Lord, it must be asserted that the gospel message is a message of salvation.

But so terse a statement here fails to show the uniqueness of the Christian gospel. It must not be forgotten that other religions also proclaim a good news, and certainly many proffer a message of salvation as well. Thus it is necessary first to recognize that, unlike other religions, neither Jesus Christ nor the New Testament claims to present a philosophy for living, nor a mystical teaching, nor an ethical code. The claim is, rather, that God took human form in order that he might make possible human participation in this process of salvation. So explicit a claim needs to inquire about the meaning of salvation-- what it means for persons to be "saved".

New outlooks on the meaning of life bring with them transformed languages. Concurrent with the coming of Jesus, the concept of salvation itself took on a new meaning, differing in part from the understanding held by his human forebears in the history of Israel. The Old Testament view of salvation is largely one of rescue from national or personal dangers-- essentially a liberation or escapist view, and is thus somewhat negative in character, as are other Eastern religions. In the New Testament, positive or constructive elements dominate, for this portion of the Bible and the new relationship between God and man are concerned not only with the harm which the world can do to a person or that he can do to himself, but also what the world or he can

fail to do in his behalf. The good news is described not only in the sense of rescuing a nation or a person or a group of selected disciples, but primarily the forgiveness of sins, a reconciling of God and man, the bringing of peace in a new way, and the healing of individual and collective persons. These concepts of sin and reconciliation are, admittedly, strange and bothersome to many readers in any era, for they involve more of a man than his intellect, and spring from a very special understanding of humankind, of God and of the relationship between the two. Sin represents some sort of separation between God and man-- effectively including a partial breakdown in communications. Reconciliation involves re-establishment of the relationship between God and men, including a renewal of the divine-human communication. The many implications arising from scriptures cannot be pursued here, but at least it is necessary to consider the meaning of salvation as presented in the New Testament. First, let some words be considered.

Evolution of the English word "salvation" suggests much of the meaning which it attempts to convey. The word derives from the same word root complex that gives the word "heal". English "salvation" and "heal" show little similarity, except implicitly in the word "salve"; but in German, the equivalence is striking. Hendrik Kraemer makes a helpful

association between communication and salvation:

"It is quite consistent that the Bible, presenting God as the originator and establisher of true relationships between him and man, and between man and man, presents him also as the initiative taker for restoring the communication after it has been broken. "The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, "Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, . . . and I hid myself." In these two expressions-- "Where art thou?" and "I hid myself"-- the dialectic in the communication between God and man is fully contained. Translated into theological terms, this means that although man still hears the voice of God . . . he flees from him, and therefore the Bible does not describe the religious history of man as a quest for God, but as a divine seeking after man . . . Heilsgeschichte, as God's persistent act . . . The German word "Heil" expresses better what is meant than the English word "salvation", which has become accentuated in the direction of rescue and redemption, which are more restricted in meaning than "Heil". From the point of view of etymology the word "Heil" is akin to Sanskrit "sarva" (i.e., whole), Greek "holos", Latin "solus", which is "totum". Connected with these words are the Latin "salvus", which means "without fail", "whole" and "healthy", and "healing". The . . . "Heiland" . . . is the "whole-maker"?

Interesting though it is, this brief review of word source fails to touch certain key elements of the meaning of salvation. No suggestion is given, for example, that the past actions of God and the present and future involvement of both God and man determine the state of one's life. Human salvation depends upon Christ's willingness to die, and also of his willingness to be born-- to persist personally in behalf of men. But salvation also involves human willingness to die to old ways and to be "born", to be

⁷Kraemer, op. cit. pp. 19-20,

transformed or recreated. (Even in the Old Testament sense outlined by the prophets, salvation as rescue is somewhat equivalent to creation.) The example of Jesus Christ's life, teachings, death, and resurrection remind us dramatically that we cannot accomplish our own salvation unassisted--action by God was fundamental (though it might remain for each of us to perceive why). Moreover, this divine example shows that God's participation in our salvation has been personal, and in the past as well as in the present and future. Man is dependent upon what has happened in his behalf. No more can a man always bring about his own wholeness than he can always rescue himself unassisted from physical dangers or from the burden of mental confusion. One's cooperation often contributes to his own rescue or continued health.

Understanding, Revelation and Salvation

Since men are called to contribute actively to their own wholeness, they need some standard for their participation. As an unconscious person experiences life in an incomplete way, so the person unaware of the salvation proclaimed by Jesus Christ cannot sense the wholeness which is possible through an apprehension of the gospel. This assertion about wholeness is not the product of theological interpretation, but a central teaching of Jesus Christ through whom salvation

is offered: teachings about having life fully, the abundant life, eternal life beginning now. (e.g., John 10:10) In his allegorical teaching about himself as the bread of life, Jesus instructs that "the words I have spoken to you are spirit and life." (John 6:63) And, underlying the entire New Testament teaching is the insistence that only by knowing Christ can one experience salvation: "I am the way, and the truth and the life." (John 14:6) Stated in theological terms, revelation is fundamental to salvation. One must somehow apprehend God in order to apprehend his own part in salvation. Thus there comes to our attention a seeming impasse: whereas a confused or half-informed person might not feel healthy or whole or secure, the lacking revelation, or understanding, or wholeness, or salvation, does not come at man's command. As already suggested, revelation somehow comes through Jesus Christ, thus we should turn first to the written record about him in the New Testament.

The discoveries from scripture about salvation are startling in many ways. Any purely mental search is soon defeated, for in many ways the Bible seems to present a circular teaching that leads the searcher to his starting point. Faith and reason appear to conflict. The teachings do not seem to make sense without some trusting openness which can be termed the start of faith, yet one cannot have this faith running in opposition to reason. A person simply

cannot believe what he does not believe! But the very message of the New Testament on this point is that revelation is not bound up in a number of doctrines or philosophical arguments, but by the reality of God taking human form, of becoming incarnate. In theological terms, we would say that revelation is incarnational, not propositional. This discovery makes possible a realization that revelation is found in personal relationship, in personal confrontation-- in communion. These confrontations in the Bible are seen rarely as occurring directly between God and man, but rather as between man and man-- or, more specifically between God and men who are united: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)

Men do not always act on this realization, of course. Perhaps the most crushing blow to the determined searcher is that revelation does not come to the proud and opinionated, but to the humble and receptive-- even as a child looks to a parent in trusting simplicity, with an openness rather than a set of prejudgments: "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3) These words are both blunt and difficult to understand, but they are consistent with Jesus' frequently paradoxical, seemingly contradictory, teachings about discipleship: "he who loses his life for my sake will find it." (Matthew 10:39) Such discipleship

requires not only trust, but an openness to receive Jesus Christ-- his example, what he said and says in our midst, what he did and does, and the wholeness that we are told these things bring. Such fruits are not readily apparent, and it is difficult to be as open as a little child!

The Nature of the Gospel Mystery

The first four books of the New Testament are perhaps the profoundest of mystery stories-- not in the modern "whodunit" sense of concealing that the decisive action has been taken by God-- but in the constantly recurring paradoxes of revelation and hiddenness, the alternating passages of clarity with others which are baffling either because of their disarming simplicity or utter profundity. Jesus is presented in the Gospel views as discouraging any easy recognition of himself as the messiah whom Israel has long awaited. The Gospel according to Mark seems deliberately to hide the true identity of the savior, and theologians of various ranks have long contended about the "messianic secret" which cannot be revealed to the world at large. Being unable to perceive the physical attributes, exact words and intended meanings of the "Jesus of history" for whom scholars persistently search, we interpret this seeming denial by the Lord to discourage shallow intellectual assent to his lordship and teachings, lest the fullness of discipleship be missed in experience.

Even in discipleship is seen the difficulty of understanding, as has been noted earlier in Jesus' explaining of parables. The early church wrestled with the same questions when the message of salvation was being carried beyond Palestine. Paul, in his correspondence to the church at Corinth, writes to the teachers there: "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." (1 Corinthians 4:1) Virtually the entire New Testament is concerned with Christian discipleship, and several letters with the subject of mystery, but it soon becomes evident that mystery is not so much concerned with the unknown as with the message about Jesus Christ. In brief, mystery is equivalent to gospel. Not so simply a matter of defying understanding, this mystery of salvation includes and extends beyond understanding. If one would perceive more of the mystery, he must live according to the gospel, as if he really believes that he can be more nearly human, a whole or saved person. This is to approach the mystery as a child-- wide-eyed and expectant. If he approaches the writings of the gospels humbly and wisely, he must be prepared to experience periods of perceiving and again not so. And never can he turn his back on discipleship with the excuse that he cannot understand.*

*We recollect Mark Twain's pithy remark that it was not what he did not understand about the Bible (or did he include only the Sermon on the Mount?) which troubled him, but what he understood all too well!

An Obstacle to Communication: "Hardening of the Heart"

But the mystery of the gospel goes far beyond an intertwining of revelation and concealment. There are many questions why certain things happen. From the earliest biblical stories there comes now the question why another feature of revelation is always cast in the negative. This element also has deep theological overtones: that of the "hardening (or fattening) of the heart", which is dramatically portrayed in the encounter between Moses and the Egyptian Pharaoh, (Exodus: Chapters 4 through 14) and subsequently in the ongoing history of the nation Israel. In the initial story describing the flight of the Hebrews from Egypt, God repeatedly hardens the heart of the Pharaoh so that he does not meet the demands made by Moses. With the ruler's repeated noncompliance, punitive measures against Pharaoh become increasingly severe, culminating in the death of the first-born children of the Egyptian mothers. And so the Hebrews were delivered from slavery, to wander in the wilderness and to be taught by God. But the new nation of Israel, in turn, became obstinate and indifferent to the divine discipline, and punishment came to them from God. When the nation has settled after their wandering, the prophets denounce the indifferent and rebellious people, whose "hardened hearts" obviously mean the wills and minds of men--their indifference and callousness to God.

In the divine call of Isaiah to a life in God's service, there is given to the prophet the cryptic advice that is often repeated in later books of the Bible:

"Go, and say to this people: 'Hear and hear, but do not understand; see and see, but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people fat, and their eyes heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." (Isaiah 6:9-10)

Jesus quotes this curious passage in his explanation of parables, as reported in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and noted here in the preceding chapter. Significantly, Jesus again quotes these words at the end of his public ministry (John 12:39-41). Paul also recalls this quotation from the book of the prophet Isaiah at the end of his ministry in Rome. Other biblical passages can be cited for this same thought, such as the rather plodding argument within the third and fourth chapters of the Letter to the Hebrews. Early Christians found this Isaianic passage popular to use in explaining why the Jews were not more receptive to the message of Christ. Whether this was faithful interpretation by the church we cannot say, but its impact touches men as a whole and would have applied as generally then as today. The passage remains controversial among scholars. G. G. D. Kilpatrick gives one understanding with which we also are sympathetic:

"The subject is the danger of becoming accustomed to the gospel. Modern psychology will confirm the claim that minds continually subjected to an appeal,

or to a warning which they do not propose to hear, develop a fatal immunity to truth. It is the same warning which our Lord gives in the parable of the soil which is so hardened by the traffic of familiar ideas that it becomes impenetrable to any instigation of truth."⁸

When it is considered that hardening of the heart constitutes an obstacle to receptivity to the gospel message, and that it arises either from action by God or by the unyielding minds of men, or through the comfortableness of group habit, we find it difficult to deny that the phenomenon is a theological matter and not merely a psychological aspect of communications. Hendrik Kraemer has appropriately suggested⁹ that such hardening is a built-in feature of communication, even a means of annihilating the gospel message for particular persons and situations. Whatever the divine intention, the stress on this feature of the scriptural record is highly suggestive, and must be considered as more than simply an impediment which can be overcome by human techniques in communication. Not only warning the individual against becoming smug as his own understanding increases, it can also remind those who proclaim the gospel that the seeming indifference on the part of other men might arise from any of several sources.

⁸G. G. D. Kilpatrick, The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39, Exposition (Vol. 5 of The Interpreter's Bible, op. cit.), p. 212-3.

⁹Kraemer, op. cit., p. 31.

Responsibilities in Communication

Hardening of the heart is so common a theme in the biblical presentation that it forces one to consider whose hearts are hardened-- whether hearers only or proclaimers of the gospel message as well. In the metaphorical language of the Parable of the Soils, it can be asked what makes the path's surface unreceptive to seeds of teaching . . . and why always travel along the same pathway? If it is admitted that communication involves personal confrontation-- necessarily a two-way relationship-- then it seems undeniable that the success or failure of communication is a two-way responsibility.

Responsibility looms large in the theology of communications. Inasmuch as one's understanding of God is strongly dependent on what is revealed to him in communication with other persons, it becomes irresponsible for one proclaiming the gospel to present this saving message in a manner which virtually precludes understanding. No longer are many persons willing to state that "I believe what the church believes". Such "implicit faith" does not stand steadily in an age of increasing demand for intellectual honesty. St. Paul's admonition to the church at Corinth about speaking in ecstatic tongues is equally applicable to other words which cannot be understood, even those of the greatest sophistication and limited meaning:

". . . he who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. What am I to do? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say the "Amen" to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? For you may give thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all; nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue."
(1 Corinthians 14:13-19)

Such is Paul's strong word to teachers. But at the other side of a communication is the person-- each person-- whose humanness depends upon his participation in the humanizing act of communication. The man who does not contribute to his own salvation casts himself in the role of a mere mechanism, and somewhat less than his full potential as a human being.

Summary Remarks

The discussion of theological guidelines has thus far covered only four aspects of communications: the role of understanding in salvation; the interpersonal nature of revelation and its importance to human salvation; the necessity to remain receptive to revelation; and the concept of the hardening of men's hearts to the offered salvation. It will be necessary to reconsider some aspects of these observations, and to confront some of their theological implications.

For now, brief recognition must be given to other theological aspects of communications. This can begin by observing that only the saving or redemptive aspects have been alluded to, while in fact there are also condemnatory aspects which arise in either intentional or careless clouding of the gospel message by those responsible for its proclamation and interpretation. Also, the preceding discussion has failed to give proper emphasis to the creative aspects of communications. This important function becomes very evident as persons seek to meet others in meaningful discussion, in "large talk" as well as "small talk", if a term may be coined. As a third point, the willingness of Christ to empty himself in behalf of man suggests that the process of communicating the gospel requires genuine giving of oneself-- an involvement which goes beyond shallow conversation. Finally, cognizance must be taken of two topics which will be mentioned later: the centrality of repentance in true communication of the gospel, and the several ethical ramifications.

But lest the dominant biblical teaching on communications has not been carried over from the preceding chapter, let it again be emphasized that the Holy Spirit of God is the prime mover in all our realization of the salvation which Christians are obligated to communicate.

CHAPTER IV

AN EXCURSUS INTO INFORMATION THEORY

"Mairsie totes 'nd dozie totes, 'nd liddle-lamsie tivy; kiddlie tivytoo, woodenyou?"
(Children's song and riddle)

"Communication is the fundamental human fact", writes Roger Mehl.¹⁰ Such a statement should provoke deep reflection, but often the temptation is toward too facile explanation-- by falling back on such clichés as "man is the talking animal" (and is thereby set apart from other creatures); or, as expressed in modern slang, "Sure, it takes two to tango, or to talk". But lengthy discussions about language and conversation cannot do justice to Mehl's observation. One needs to consider, instead, in what ways communication matters to an individual who would be human. Man apart from other men cannot be human in a full sense; association with other men is necessary for the wholeness which is humanness. The aged person living alone often "loses his mind", so one still hears in remote rural areas; and today we are reminded of the many persons who suffer desperate loneliness among millions of other persons in large cities. The fictional Robinson Crusoe experiences the agonizing absence of another

¹⁰Ibid, quoting Roger Mehl, La Rencontre de l'autrui; p. 11 in Kraemer (op. cit.); p. 7 in Mehl.

human being. The deafmute virtually disintegrates unless he is able to communicate with other persons, and the substitution of his hands for tongue reminds us that communication can take many forms other than the spoken or written word.

As this discussion moves toward some observed details of person-to-person word exchange in communications, the guiding viewpoint is that Christianity calls men to full humanity, and that humanity requires communications among persons. Emphasis here is placed on some simple observations of at least three basic functions which can be ascribed to communications generally and to words in particular: to establish person-to-person bonds, to solve problems, and to fulfill emotional needs. Speaking, letter-writing, the handshake, a nod, and a myriad of other expressions play some role in all three functions. Union is a common theme of communications in the Bible-- binding Israel to her God, joining men in the serious relationship of covenant, molding a diffuse gathering of people to become an infant church. Modern technology emphasizes the function of problem-solving, and has engendered a large body of specialized theory and literature developed along with material products of the effort. Almost every expression of modern living shows some recognition of the ability of communications to attract persons to some cause or need-- real or imagined.

The Human Side of Communications

Except within a small segment of the population who deal daily with human cravings or human disorders, current concern largely overlooks the important third function of communications, namely that of meeting human emotional needs. Fundamental to this function is a recognition by most persons that they are a part of the world, in which they are dependent upon others and other persons upon them. A person speaks because he is not alone. Communication and community are inseparable. Closely connected to the idea of interdependence is the ability of the person to add himself to the world.¹¹ A man becomes a person in a world of other people because he is able, and usually striving, to express himself. By expressing himself, in actions or by some other assertion, a man places himself in the world to an extent that he would not be otherwise. This point needs to be borne in mind as the discussion turns later to the ability of persons to "express" themselves into the church.

Perhaps the real power and importance of communications stands out most sharply when one considers not the fruits of communication, but the results of disintegrated communications. It is common knowledge that the outcomes of military campaigns have hinged on the success or failure of important messages

¹¹Gusdorf, op. cit., p. 71.

to be delivered and understood. Industrial organizations are judged inefficient if wishes of the management are incompletely conveyed to the various departments, and enlightened managers are also alert to hear the reactions of subordinates. Families are torn apart by misunderstanding arising from differing interpretations on seemingly unimportant issues. Individual human disorders, technically known as aphasia, are breakdowns in the internal communication systems of a person which cut him off from persons around him and cast him into a strange limbo-- "the whole intellectual structuring of existence within him is in the process of breaking down."¹²

Norbert Wiener, in his monumental mathematical treatise on the use of "information" to control automatic (largely industrial) processes,¹³ finds a number of analogies in the functioning of the human body, as mechanical movements depend upon information from the nervous system. His descriptions of internal malfunction are striking. Normal functioning of the muscles ceases when corrective information from the nervous system is not forthcoming. "Nervous breakdown", on the other hand, arises when excessive information is being

¹²Ibid, p. 8.

¹³Norbert Wiener, Cybernetics (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1950), p. 95.

received by a person. We might ask whether Professor Wiener has unwittingly described the state of the church in its dependence on communications.

Specialized Studies in Communications

It is sometimes hinted that the church's concern for the severity of problems in communication is limited to simple refutations of remarks made by experts who stray from other fields into the realm of theology. The economist Kenneth E. Boulding, in The Organizational Revolution, has written sharply about the effects of communication breakdown within all organizations, which he calls "sins of the flesh".¹⁴ Reinhold Niebuhr takes exception to Boulding's remarks, and his disagreement goes far beyond pointing out that the economist's interpretation of scripture is weak in appropriating Paul's expression "sins of the flesh" while removing the intended meaning of self-centeredness. Boulding would ascribe weakening of the purest of Christian social bodies to "institutional hardening" (institutionalization). Niebuhr sees the trouble not in "bad bodies", but rather in a bad soul deceiving the body.¹⁵ Communications within an organization,

¹⁴Kenneth Boulding, The Organizational Revolution (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. 67.

¹⁵Ibid., Reinhold Niebuhr's commentary on Boulding's work; p. 244.

in Niebuhr's view, is subject to change only if the organization's "soul" can be healed.

This describes only one brief skirmish. In the larger view, there has been a considerable concern of long standing and on many fronts of activity. Only three such areas will be mentioned here, while a great number are left unmentioned in pastoral psychology, ethics, and virtually every other discipline that is traditionally associated with the church's function of guiding and caring for people. First, the question of faithful interpretation is of continuing concern, and finds its systematic presentation under the impressive name of hermeneutics. One extreme in the search for interpretation is represented by the detailed work of Bultmann and others (mentioned in Chapter II on biblical background) as they seek to "demythologize" scriptures-- to ascertain original meanings of scriptural writings. Another expression of the concern about interpretation is the study reported in the present work-- what meanings are now held.

A second area of intensive work which must be mentioned is that of the diverse field of linguistics. The single area of linguistic analysis has claimed much of the attention of present-day philosophers, with a shift in attention from attempts to describe human experience, in terms of the senses, to the use and implications of language itself as employed in claims to knowledge.

The third example pertains to a scientific endeavor which is beyond the church's direct concern about communications. This technical area bears the disarming name communication theory (or information theory) and is as specialized as hermeneutics among students of literature or as linguistic analysis among philosophers. However, far more laymen apprehend the material consequences and even the jargon of this effort. Its importance stems in part from the fact that this discipline is continuing to mold in a very dramatic way the secular world with which the church must carry out deep and searching conversation and mutual transformation. Many persons who have been responsible for the orderly development of this technical field are also church-attending Christians. Most of us are being both freed and threatened by "automation" which is one of its best known offspring. But aside from the technological and sociological implications of communication theory, there is associated with it several simple concepts and terms which serve as good reminders to all churchmen, lay and clergy alike, about important and often forgotten aspects of personal communications. The following account might seem needlessly long-- indeed it is presented in two ways-- but it carries with it the author's dual hope: first, that rephrasing will make a helpful lasting impression that common sense also supplies; and, second, that it can serve as a bridge for persons who are very familiar

with the technological concepts presented in this chapter but are still not at home with the thought associated with Christian worship. In short, we are attempting to practice one of the requirements for communications, that the preacher must understand not only the Word of God, but also the words of men.¹⁶

An Introduction to Information Theory

As languages arise from human searching for orderliness, so has modern communication theory or information theory. Brought into being by the desire to systematize and extend the usefulness of telegraph and radio communications, this theory can be described with qualitative completeness in terms of such systems. However, any description is only partial unless it includes the mathematical rigor and, necessarily, the mathematical language which constitutes information theory. This theory deals quantitatively with the exchange of intelligence of many sorts. The theory does not concern itself with qualitative features, and in that respect fails to confront much of the church's concern about communications. The specific goal is to describe how information can be exchanged at the maximum possible rate with minimum likelihood

¹⁶Reuel Howe, The Miracle of Dialogue (New York: Seabury, 1963), p. 15.

of being altered from the intended meaning. In accomplishing this basic goal, the theory recognizes that the impartation of information is never perfect, that there is always some uncertainty in the process. The success of communication can, indeed, be described mathematically by stating that the "information" equals the reduction in uncertainty during the exchange: the uncertainty before minus the uncertainty after. (In the theory, uncertainty is expressed mathematically in terms of probability.)

But already the discussion is turning away from the simple features of communications, and it is necessary for the present purpose to return to more general descriptions. Perhaps the most helpful suggestion is to forget the mathematical equations and what they might imply, and to note that the "information" being dealt with can be described in small units. The units might be words or sounds representing letters or numbers, or the flow of electricity from a room thermostat, "informing" a furnace that additional heat is needed to maintain the desired temperature in the front parlor. The early concern, historically, was with pulses of electrical energy constituting the dots and dashes of telegraphy and wireless communications. High-speed adding machines are also well-known. These are very simple examples, but the underlying theory opens the way for more complex and versatile computing equipment, with the ability to retain information

in its "memory bank", and of radar equipment to correct some of its own target-seeking endeavors.

A Simple Analogy in Conveying Information

Communication can be likened to the function of a conveyor belt as it transports objects from one location to another, say from a storage warehouse to a shipping platform. The belt can be called a communication channel. Counterparts of the belt are found in wires for telephones and pipes for water distribution. The person or machine that places items on the conveyor would be called a transmitter in communication theory, and the person or equipment at the other end the receiver-- both of these terms well-known when associated with telephones or radios. Efficient utilization of the conveyor requires that it be able to transport objects from the warehouse as soon as they are available to be moved, but it should not be idle much of the time. Economics or time limitations might dictate that the channel be used at nearly its full working capacity, by assuring the regular placement of the items on the belt or by changing the speed of the belt to accommodate various degrees of loading. It should be evident that conveyor capacity is limited by the speed with which it moves, by the width of the belt upon which the items can be carried, and by the height to which the belt is stacked by a loader. Obviously, it would be unwise to place items on

a belt at a greater rate than they could be removed by the receiver.

Features analogous to those of a conveyor system can be drawn from the problem of human communications. For example, the breadth and depth of one's knowledge will partially control the extent of his comprehension at any rate of hearing, and his alertness will affect his ability to grasp even the simplest ideas in a brief period of time. As the type of belt material should be chosen to be compatible with the items being carried (certainly not a coarse screen to carry pearls!), so a teacher of music appreciation cannot confine himself to words. Some matching of message to channel is necessary. (The mathematical formulas of information theory allow estimates to be made of the likelihood of unimpaired delivery. That is to say, the matching has statistical guidelines which enable a designer to select fidelity of communication in terms of the consequences-- of cost, equipment size, speed of operation, and the like.)

Finally, the analogy must be extended to include other parts of a conveyor structure. Large items cannot be carried on a belt where there is limited overhead clearance, no more easily than large boats can pass under low bridges. Information theory recognizes band width limitations, a concept which many phonograph hobbyists know well, as they recognize that both the trill of the piccolo and the boom

of the tympanum might fail to be reproduced faithfully by a low-quality phonograph. For related reasons, the aesthetic presentation of an idea might not be meaningful to a "practical" businessman, whereas an earthy example drawn from the recollection of childhood days on the farm might convey nothing to a life-long city dweller.

Before the analogy of the conveyor is discarded, it should be noted that such equipment is always used with some goal in view, as it should be in the case of any form of communication. For example, a conveyor could be used to load wheat into a ship. If the conveyor is used to fill several holds sequentially, the movement of grain should not begin until the first hold is open and ready to receive the wheat. Obviously, flow should cease before the hold is overfilled, and this cessation must be anticipated to allow the conveyor to empty its contents before moving to its next position over another hold. Information in some form-- a light signal or a shout from a human observer, or another means-- must be given to make proper control possible. In a word common in information theory (a term which can now be used in the illustration with more significance than "communication theory"), a feedback to the conveyor power source must be used. This information feedback is not the material being "fed" to the conveyor (i.e., the grain), but of another form. In electrical communication systems, this feedback

is an electrical flow, which might be a portion (usually insignificantly small) of that providing the power for the major function of activating the conveyor. This feedback function will soon be seen to be of major interest in the church's communication, and inseparably to relate mission and method.

Diagrammatic Representation of Communications

The simple conveyor analogy could be carried into even finer detail, but that would only delay confrontation with the major interest in person-to-person communications, to which the discussion now turns. In the form of a sketch, the simple utterance of an idea can be schematized as information radiating from a human speaker (Figure 1).

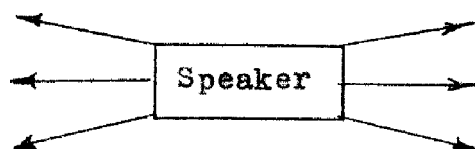


Figure 1. Schematization of speaking.

If another person is within earshot, the relationship can be represented by a connecting line between two individuals, as in Figure 2. Some auditory bond is established with this

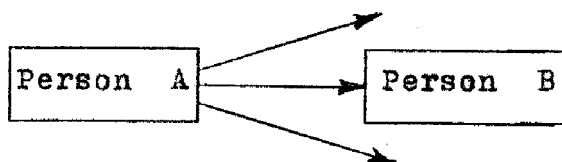


Figure 2. Diagrammatic illustration of a speaker and one hearer.

second person, who, for example, might be listening to a sermon and apprehending the message which is being delivered. Another person, C in Figure 3, might also hear the speaker but not comprehend his message because an unfamiliar language, vocabulary or concept is being used. Person D might be distracted by the sound of a child's cry, because the speaker's

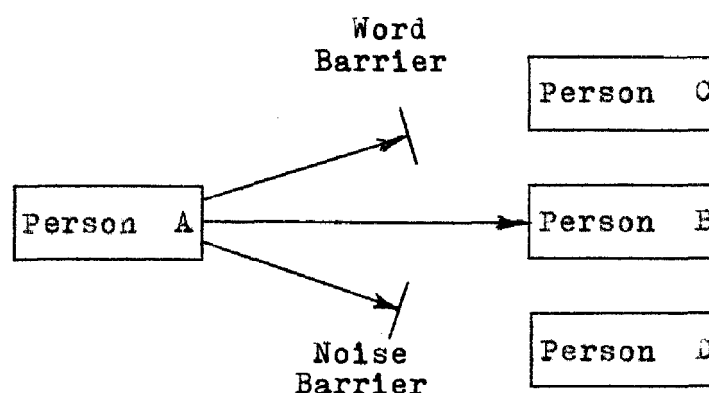


Figure 3. Unsuccessful communications illustrated.

voice is not sufficiently loud, or perhaps because his own daydreaming interferes. (These failures in communication have counterparts in electrical communication systems, and are normally classed as noise. One of the major successes of electronic communications theory has been the development of theories and techniques which allow maximum information to be imparted in the presence of noise. Personal communication can probably profit from both the general and specific lessons to be learned in the mathematical theory, but such effort cannot be included in the present study.)

Attention is redirected to the speaker in the preceding illustrations. If Person A is merely reading a prepared body of writing, his contributions are mainly a proper concern for loudness, emphasis of certain words, and adherence to the content. If, however, he is also the creator of the message, the speaker must select specific words and an order of words or signs, or gestures, to fashion his message. This he does by calling upon his experience, his suppositions about persons with whom he wishes to converse, and the general content of the information which he wishes to convey. In any event, the originator draws together certain forms of words which he then speaks. His actions are represented by the left-hand portion of Figure 4. The receiving person, having heard the

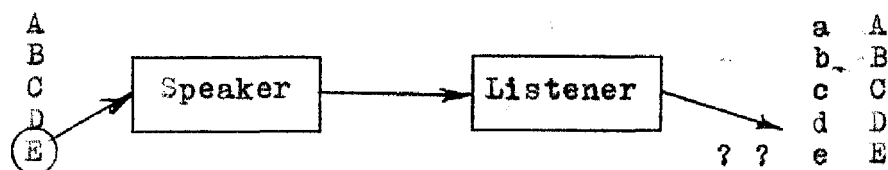


Figure 4. Selection of message content

message spoken with content E, might interpret the intent actually as E; or, perhaps swayed by his expectations, to arrive at the similar content e; or distorted to consist partly of E and partly of D; or of d and e-- or the message might be missed.

Several important features of communication become evident in this reminder. First, it can be recognized that certain actions are taken at each end of the communication. The idea or concept which is to be transmitted must be put in some form to allow its use by the receiver. If such reception occurs, it can be said that communication is established, though perhaps not exactly as intended. Otherwise-- and here a term is chosen arbitrarily-- some idea was expressed, but not necessarily communicated. (A radio station broadcasting when no receivers are operating is not carrying out its primary function to make itself heard.) The moral is simple: At least two persons must participate in communication.

The second feature has just been implied also: that information theory involves a separation of functions which are the responsibility of each end of the information exchange. The action of the originator is first encoding and then transmitting, whereas the other person has first to receive and then to decode. The two underlined words, "encode" and "decode", are introduced here because they imply that message content is not self-evident, but in some way is dealt with by persons (and, admittedly, they introduce the mysterious aura of secret messages which deny information to persons not understanding the key to the code). Each of the

fundamental elements is illustrated in Figure 5: encoding, transmission, reception, and decoding.

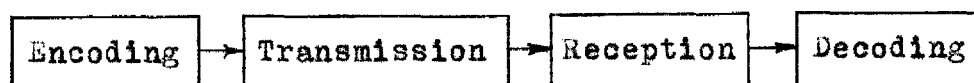


Figure 5. Elementary functions in communication.

The question now arises whether and how quantitative measures can be made of the success or failure of communication, and the further isolation of causes to specific functions of encoding, decoding or other reasons. Whatever the outcome of such appraisal, a third consideration is brought to attention-- namely, the unlikelihood that the desired idea will be received unchanged from the original intent, or interpreted even if the mechanics of reception are perfect-- if, for example, every spoken word is heard. The mathematical treatment of information theory characterizes each function, and others soon to be mentioned, in the form of formulas which allow measures of the interdependence among functions and the conditions necessary for the most favorable performance of each. Central to the theory is the realization that information is always transmitted with some probability that it will be imperfectly communicated. Communication, in each of its elements, is a statistical matter. This realization makes the modern mathematical theory possible. Moreover, lest it seem a harsh view of personal communication as well,

it should be noted that communication is necessary for the very reason that there is uncertainty on some matter about which information needs to be transmitted-- let us say some doubt in the hearer's mind whether he already knows all that is to be known on the subject of the information.

Another reminder which is pertinent to the communication of words follows from the analysis of reasons for failure in electrical communication. Some of the reasons are summarily called noise-- a term familiar to anyone who has been distracted by the "static" which interferes with radio performance when a thunderstorm approaches. But other noise arises within the radio receiver itself (witness the ever-present hum), and in the transmitter. The reader can draw his own analogies in the communication of the church's messages. The schematic representation could be as shown in Figure 6. This Figure represents the situation in electronic

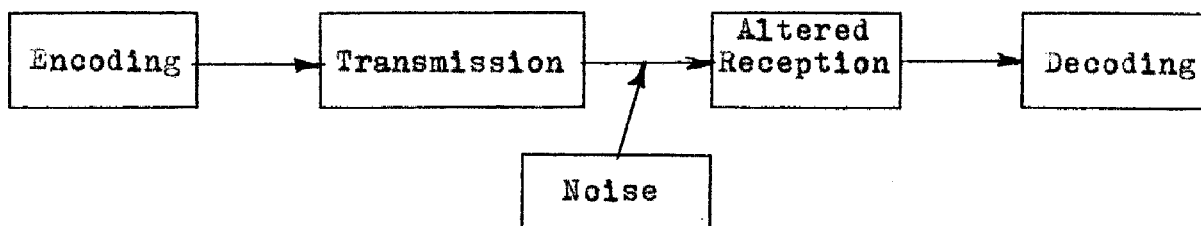


Figure 6. Noise introduced into attempted communications.

communications until about twenty-five years ago. Perhaps the most significant observation to be made is that the

information moves in a single direction (left to right in the diagram). Is the message received undistorted? There is no way of knowing, in so far as the illustrated components are concerned. In the jargon of modern communication theory, this figure illustrates "open-loop" control.

The name "open-loop" philosophy governed the steering of ships for many centuries, as illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 7. Because of water currents and other "navigational noises", the actual course could be greatly different from

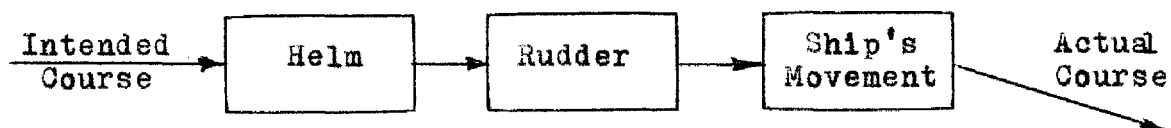


Figure 7. Simple ("open-loop") ship steering.

that desired, as hundreds of shipwrecked hulls will attest.

Modern electrical navigation equipment allows a continuous monitoring of a ship's course, and thus allows a completely different philosophy of control, schematized in Figure 8.

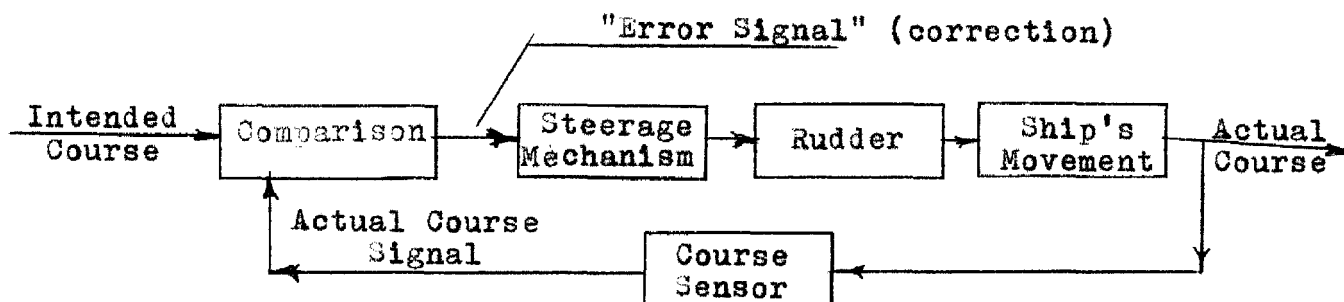


Figure 8. Closed-loop Ship steering.

Information does not pass simply in the direction from helmsman's action to rudder's placement to ship's heading. On the contrary, an indication of the actual ship's heading is continuously provided for comparison with the intended course, and a continuous correction is supplied to the steering mechanism. This is a simple example of feedback in the modern meaning within information theory. It is this feature which we believe offers one of the greatest incompletely explored helps in communicating the church's message. (This mode of operation is also, incidentally, the source of the new word in automated processes-- "cybernetics", from the Greek kyvernētes: helmsman.)

By way of reviewing some of the suggestions which information theory might make to communication of the gospel as a unique message, reference is made to the somewhat more complex Figure 9. (Page 60) The basic communication elements are present, and more than one message is indicated. Communication is taking place in several ways. Not only the intended message is indicated, but also messages from competing sources-- basic attitudes about man, the attraction of political ideologies, one's memory, his social environment, and others. Moreover, an added step prior to transmission is shown. This arises from that fact that the message which the church proclaims is not immediately available for proclamation in unaltered form. The Bible requires "decoding"

and "encoding", the two primary objectives of experts in the field of hermeneutics, which was mentioned earlier in this

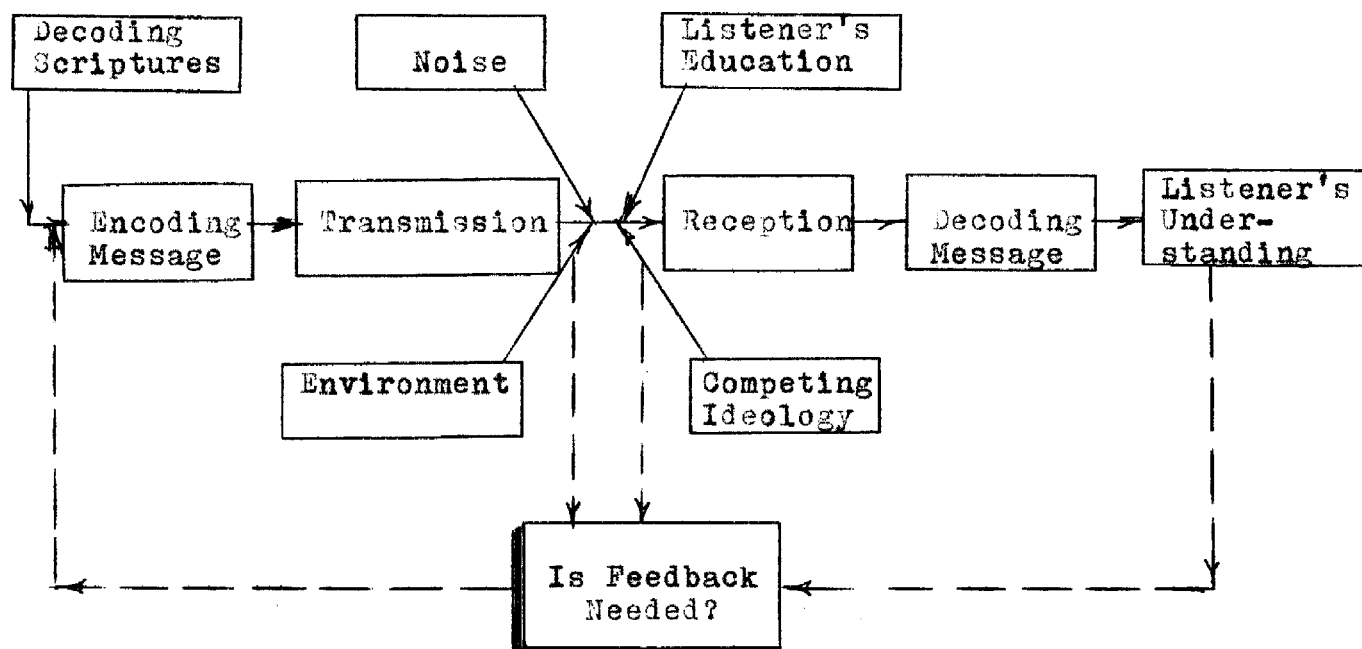


Figure 9. Simultaneous reception of several messages.

chapter. But the same problems are ever-present for the preacher, the teacher, the parent attempting to explain Jesus to his child or to give him his first instruction about God.

The final diagram has posed the question whether a feedback system is necessary in the communication of a message which must compete with other messages. The answer depends in part upon whether the person attempting to impart the message is truly committed to communication and not merely to expression. Nor must it be forgotten that success also

requires a receptivity on the part of his audience or congregation. Whether some feedback system is used also depends upon whether the persons involved are aware that such techniques are possible. This study is striving to investigate the aspect of feedback, on a somewhat more objective basis than the methods generally recommended in textbooks on the subject of effective speech. Whereas the textbooks might give such subjective advice that a speaker should carefully observe his audience to determine whether eye contact can be maintained, ergo attention which leads to understanding, we are simply recommending that the speaker ask members of the audience if they understand.

Redundancy of Information

Before the example provided by communication theory is left, another concept needs to be mentioned-- namely that of redundancy, literally the transmission of more information than would be necessary to transmit if there were absolute certainty that all information could be received and understood. Redundancy does not simply mean repetition, although repetition can also increase the likelihood of proper reception. In the example of electronic devices, simple repetition might be useless for the reason that a particular element in the equipment always distorts that very type of electrical information. Several examples can be borrowed instead from the common experience of presenting written

material. In an old church school puzzle can be found an anglicized illustration of how ancient Hebrew script used no vowels or word spacings. Suppose that the puzzle is presented to a class as follows:

"PUZZLE: Gdsnwhr.

Add vowels and spaces to learn the message."

An imaginative class soon reaches the stage of guessing:

"God is now here"-- or is it "God is nowhere?"-- by inserting the same vowels but with different spacing. A redundancy in the form of spacing in the original to "Gd s nw hr" would have eliminated the second possibility. But it should be noted that neither can be proved to be certainly correct, for such possibilities as "Good is new hair" arise through a different combination of vowels. The context and background information are thus seen to be very important, as, for example a hint with the puzzle such as "a divine being resides with us now" would have given greater assurance of an understanding of the intended message that "God is now here".

Toward Church Communications

The discussion about information theory has perhaps posed more questions than it has been able to answer on the subject of communications within church and between church and other persons. Maybe the viewpoint of this unrelated discipline can bring some helpful reminders to those who

assume responsibility for transmitting the good news about our Lord. Perhaps the methodology of considering separate functions in communications can serve as guidelines in detecting barriers in human communications, particularly to determine whether obstacles to understanding are primarily under the control of the teacher. Maybe the greatest contribution is the reminder that a message must be matched in some way with its receivers, and that at times this must be done on some statistical basis-- for example, seeking the means to reach the greatest number or the most neglected groups. Or maybe the main lesson can be drawn from the recollection that when communication breakdown occurs with electrical equipment, the first task of the repairman is to determine where failure has occurred. Hopefully, the experience reported in the next chapter will justify some of the effort of the preceding discussion, for the experience next described forces a recognition of two features of communication which have been discussed-- namely, feedback and redundancy. Could these factors have been known through common sense considerations? We believe definitely "Yes", but the evidence indicates that even common sense needs occasional reminders from formalized guidelines.

CHAPTER V

AN EXPERIMENT IN SOME UNDERSTANDINGS OF WORDS

"[There are] many points in common between the logic of communication and the logic of experiment and scientific method." (Colin Cherry, On Human Communication)¹⁷

Adults meeting in groups to discuss their concern for the church often vocalize a complaint which can be summarized as, "The church uses words which nobody can understand". Such remarks are seldom directed toward particular words, but are variously directed toward sermons, the Bible in several translations, hymnody, the Book of Common Prayer, and a range of other utterances. Although frequently stated in general terms and sometimes defensively, this criticism is sincerely meant, and deserves conscientious examination. The accusation may be accompanied by considerable emotion, and undoubtedly is unheard from persons who have already severed direct ties with the church.

Two persons in conversation can usually reach understanding on the meaning of specific words, but even under this circumstance a periodic re-examination is often helpful. Monologues of the type which we know as sermons leave many

¹⁷Colin Cherry, On Human Communications (New York: John Wiley Sons, 1961), p. 246.

hearers confused and unable to arrive at the preacher's intent through a thicket of content. Greater understanding is currently being ascribed to group discussion as fundamentally different-- not monologues, but dialogues with helpful interactions.¹⁸ Each new insight and new understanding leads to still another in the environment of groups. Discussion is experiment, adjustment and redirection, and follows the scientific method in a true sense, as Colin Cherry's words suggest at the start of this chapter.

The author's experience suggests that well-knit groups will repeatedly return to brief discussions of word meanings, to test their understanding prior to taking the next venturesome step. But Thomas Steen finds a more serious trouble with words as they enter group functions:

"We soon ran into one of our major problems, one which we have experienced since then in every one of our groups: clarifying and understanding of religious words and symbols. A vocabulary can be a means of separating people as well as of uniting them. We often spent a whole evening attempting to arrive at an understanding of a word or phrase . . . This experience itself indicates how inadequate it is simply to preach the word from the pulpit. The church must find a way whereby words can grow new meanings and make communication possible."¹⁹

¹⁸David J. Ernsberger, A Philosophy of Adult Christian Education (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959); John L. Casteel (ed.), Spiritual Renewal Through Personal Groups (New York: Association Press, 1957); and others.

¹⁹Thomas M. Steen, Renewal in the Church (Casteel (ed.), op. cit.), p. 34.

Steen's assertion is stronger than the convictions which underlie the present study, but the implication seems correct that words constitute a vital element in communication and understanding, and need to be examined in several ways. This present effort finds its focus in determining some common interpretations of words by laymen who hear them.

Planning an Experiment: The Underlying Philosophy

One immediate product of the concern about vocabulary is the word survey which is discussed in this and the next chapter. The primary goal is to determine which words and concepts in common use within the church's vocabulary are understood widely and which on a more localized basis, and to draw some simple conclusions from the experimental results. However, no attempt is made to assess why some meanings are preferred over others, nor to speculate about possible explanations. The objective is basically one of fact-finding, in which the basic data have been supplied by more than three hundred lay persons, responding to the general question, "What understanding do you have of the following....?"

All attempts to measure understandings of words were made within the framework of groups of persons. Written forms were completed individually by the participants, with prior agreement in some cases that the groups would have full opportunity to explore concepts and words-- and in their

origins, their changing meanings, alternatives, suggestive powers, and the like. All of the initial tests were carried out with direct contact between the author and the participants, and later with other persons leading the groups-- some of whom did not give detailed instructions to the participants. It has thus been possible to observe important and sometimes unexpected features in the workings of groups-- in two cases for periods of several months. Indeed, the dynamics of group formation and discussion and the general acceptance of testing procedures within the church proved to be as informative as the data on vocabulary, and will be discussed later in this chapter.

Although the intent of the test program was to obtain data of some statistical significance, a necessity to limit scope was also evident. Such limiting accorded with the primary intention of the study as a "pilot experiment"-- the word pilot preferably being understood as that of an exploration to serve as a future guide, and not suggesting skills and knowledge about the only tricky passage between real or imaginary shoals which lie in the channel of communications.* Thus, for scope, it was decided to restrict

*Although, humorously, there was sometimes the suggestion of being a pilot of the aeronautical type, well above the realities of parish cares, and occasionally the feeling of being like the small pilot fish which swims near the mouth of a large shark!)

the participants in the first of two phases of study to highly literate persons who attended church regularly and who previously had shown some interest in Christian education. The underlying assumption was that this group would probably be among the most articulate persons within the church. If uniformly good understanding should be observed, further testing could proceed to persons having lower levels of education. Poor understanding in this pilot test would suggest a churchwide difficulty with vocabulary, but this implication would also require verification in further tests.

A special effort has been made to conduct an experiment in such a way that responses could be made and ideas exchanged freely. Written opinions were obtained anonymously from persons assembled into groups which later could provide variants in the interpretation of words and concepts. Special care was taken to minimize any influence of the sampling procedure on the outcome of the testing. An important aspect of the experiment was to emphasize that opinions were being sought, that no search was being made for right or wrong answers. This emphasis and the feature of anonymity apparently facilitated the acquisition of information and an intense participation of laymen in open group discussions.

Participants in the Experiment

The make-up of the participating groups is described in Appendix A, and was, briefly, as follows:

1. Initial opinions on word meanings were gathered from six groups in the geographical areas of Bedford, Cambridge, and Wrentham, Massachusetts, and Montvale, New Jersey. Five adult groups represented three suburban parishes (of which one was an organized committee on Christian education), one group of graduate students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and one undergraduate group from Harvard University and Radcliffe College. One high school group was also involved. Two parishes were unwilling to participate in this phase of study.
2. A second phase of testing was started with fifteen proposed parishes in the Diocese of Massachusetts. Of these, eight participated actively, two took a limited part in the study and five withdrew at the beginning or failed to complete the agreed effort. Three groups in this phase were high school students: eight other groups were composed of adults, otherwise not categorized.

Among eleven participating churches, five are in fairly new residential suburban areas and six in older industrialized

and commercial areas; and five churches which did not participate actively are located within older urban areas. (The brief descriptions for each parish and participating group given in Appendix A do not list exact number of participants, in keeping with the promise to maintain anonymity when detailed responses are noted in Appendix C.)

Choosing the Word List

Selection of representative words for opinion sampling was accomplished in three steps, now described:

1. An initial list of 111 words and phrases (hereafter referred to simply as "words") was chosen during the summer of 1965, as the author attended various Episcopal churches in the Cambridge, Massachusetts and Annapolis, Maryland areas. Every word placed on this preliminary list was heard during periods of corporate worship, or was read as the author perused pew books prior to the start of services. This list is included as the first portion of Table II, which constitutes Appendix B. Many of the words were found to be used in several spoken or written expressions, occasionally in all five of the following: Bible reading, sermons, chants, hymns, or prayers. (For illustration without necessitating reference to Appendix B, the first

dozen words are cited here: "absolution", "agnostic", "alienation", "angels", "apocalypse", "Apocrypha", "Ascension", "ascetic", "atheist", "Atonement", "The Baals", and "Calvinistic".)

2. The initial list was then submitted to a group of 30 persons, almost equally divided among laymen, clergymen and seminarians, to eliminate some of the early choices and to add others. The instructions were given in an intentionally vague manner, as it was explained that "the writer is examining the vocabulary of the Church used to address its members in the words of scripture, the Book of Common Prayer, sermons, and other communications." More than eighty per cent of the printed forms were returned to the author, but sometimes only after he had made several requests for a response. About one-third of the respondents asked for a clarification on what was meant by "the Church" and "usage", and were told that both terms should be interpreted as whatever the words meant to them. Significantly, this explanation was accepted readily by all lay participants, but five of 25 clergymen and seminarians stated that they were unable to answer on that basis, or delayed so long that their contributions were of no use in selecting the final word list.

Results of the survey are also included in Table II.

(Appendix B) This list is the product of the following instructions:

- "1. Draw a line through words which you believe are not representative of present usage by the Church.
2. Add other words which you believe need to be considered with regard to understanding by adult laymen.
3. Circle words which you believe can be examined in detail (in multiple choice answers) to test the comprehension of meanings."

Briefly summarized, the original list of 111 words was increased to 210, of which the added 99 words follow the listing of the original list.

3. Final reduction to 69 words was then made by two criteria: popularity among the 30 selecting participants and by opinions about the ability to supply an adequate list of meanings for later use in multiple choice polling. Every word on the final list was cited by at least two persons.

Description of the Written Test Form

The final step in setting up the experiment was to prepare printed sheets in a form to expedite the submission of opinions. The complete 16-page form is presented in Appendix C. Three sections are included:

1. The first section is simply an instruction sheet which states that the forms should be filled in anonymously, as each participant records "what

the words mean to you." Two requests are made in the way of further instructions: (a) to supply opinions about every word on each page, and (b) to complete each page before turning to the next page. Only simple pencil marking is required.

2. The second section consists of four sheets, each listing the same 69 words, but with different instructions for the purpose of sampling understanding. Briefly, the questions asked are:

- a) "Which words do you feel that you understand to your own satisfaction?"
- b) "Which words could you use in discussions with another person of your background?"
- c) "Which words could you explain to a non-Christian having a secular background similar to yours?"
- d) "Which words could you explain to your child or godchild?"

and each list begins as follows:

- "1. absolution
2. alienation
3. Christ's Ascension . . . "

3. The third section of ten pages makes up two-thirds of the test packet. The same 69 words are listed with from three to six choices of possible interpretations and the instructions to take one of three actions:

- "(a) Check one interpretation which most nearly expresses your understanding, or
- (b) If you have a better interpretation, write it beneath the word (or words) in question, or
- (c) If you have no understanding, draw a line through the word in question."

For example, the fourth word is:

"4. The Atonement

- a. _____ the At-one-ment of God and man
- b. _____ reconciliation of God and man
- c. _____ Christ's propitiation for our sins
- d. _____ re-establishment of friendship with God".

Preview of the Findings

Results of the test program will be reported in terms of:

1. General reactions and suggestions made prior to the experiment;
2. General reactions of participants and of leadership personnel within whose jurisdictions permission for testing was requested;
3. Statistics on the written opinions which were obtained;
4. General comparisons of data and group responses.

Many of the conclusions are thus seen to be of a general nature-- some necessarily to preserve anonymity. Often the remarks are subjective, and might appear to the reader to arise

from varying moods of the author. Lest this be too often the case, the reported observations about attitudes expressed and actions taken (or not taken) by participants and assisting persons were confirmed in subsequent discussions between the author and those laymen, clergymen and seminarians who were able to speak knowledgeably on the particular issue. For example, seminarians sometimes advised the author whether his observations were correct that one clergyman was receptive to the program and another hostile or another permissive. Several times it was reported that "the chain of command" had blocked any ability to observe the process: a clergyman passing the forms to his assistant or education director, in turn to group or class leaders, in turn to group assistants, and thence to the participants. The substantial amount of data given in Appendix C, interpreted by the reader with reference to the parish statistics in Appendix A, will allow further interpretation.

Response of Lay Participants to the Experiment

The usual reactions of lay participants was that of full cooperation and considerable interest. Opinions were given freely, and there were no reported remarks of opposition about "becoming a statistic", although some suspicion was voiced by participants that they were being examined and not merely being asked to state their opinions. This latter

reaction was voiced only when the forms were described to the participants in a perfunctory manner. Testing done personally by the author was always followed by active discussions, ranging from one-half hour to more than three hours, and usually terminated because of time limitations. (Two groups continued in discussions for three or more separate sessions.) In such instances, the participants were eager to share opinions, and generally inquired about how the opinions of the particular group compared with the opinions of other groups, or with a norm. There was also expressed a desire to hear "what are the right answers", a free giving of opinions, and seldom heated defense of a particular viewpoint. After discussions, it was often recognized that a number of the words and phrases could each be adequately described by several choices of meaning presented, and in other instances that no completely satisfactory choice had been provided by the author or subsequently by the group. Rarely was any suggestion made from the groups that the Bible might be consulted for clarification of specific points.

Very few comments were made about the nature of conducting the opinion gathering. Some persons stated that a 45-minute period required by most people to complete the entire form was excessive, but this expression was often prompted by an eagerness for the group to move on to discussion.

(The shorter form could be completed in about 20 minutes, with only incidental discussion.)

Three major results were immediately apparent in all gatherings which the author observed, as follows:

1. There was an attitude that the opinion gathering was to be done seriously, but the groups enjoyed the process, as could be noted by comments during the work and thereafter.
2. Almost all persons who expressed an opinion seemed pleased that the church was inquiring about its communications.
3. The experience of meeting to give opinions proved to be a very effective means of drawing persons into active working groups.

In the dynamics of spontaneous group formation, one of the most rewarding aspects of the author's work was to observe how gatherings of persons of only slight acquaintance become quickly involved in discussions on a subject which was important to them. Particularly intriguing was the way in which group searching for meanings of often-heard words brought most group members to a common starting point for future discussions. (This phenomenon is described in the next chapter as being similar to the "therapeutic regression" which is important in the healing of physical ills.)

Reactions of Church Leadership to the Experiment

In contrast to the generally enthusiastic response of lay participants who supplied the bulk of the information, both laymen and clergymen in positions of formulating and directing the functions of teaching and evangelism were of very mixed and sometimes extreme reaction. Some clergymen responded immediately and favorably to inquiries about helping to formulate the word lists and to set up times and places for later discussions. (At least one clergyman had already conducted some systematic instruction to adults about the meanings of words and theological concepts.) During the period of gathering opinions, the experiment was greatly facilitated when clergymen encouraged participation on the part of their congregational members. One parish whose clergyman showed an interest in the outcome of the testing far exceeded others in the number of contributions. In contrast, some parishes which could easily have supplied a hundred replies produced fewer than a dozen responses. One of the known reasons for lack of participation was clergy permission without a personal overseeing or expression of interest. Essentially no responses were obtained when the opinion forms were distributed through three or more organizational steps to the participants, or when the instructions were given to a group leader equivalent to, "Why don't you try this on the kids?"

Of the first seven clergymen interviewed about the proposed study while it was still in the formative phases, two were very enthusiastic, two expressed interest and offered their assistance in general terms, one offered to provide facilities and to serve as a "sounding board" on specific words, and two were clearly opposed to having studies conducted among persons under their care. This pattern was observed in subsequent interviews with other persons, including seminary faculty and diocesan staff members. Some of the reasons for the predominantly negative reactions became evident during the first few months of the study, as follows:

1. General lack of confidence in opinion polls;
2. Belief that the problem of communications is too large to be lessened by any research into the matter;
3. Misgivings that a "poor showing" by parishioners would be equated to poor communications involving the clergyman; (Six of fourteen seminarians who assisted in the program reported that the clergymen or others in charge were "threatened" by the test proposal, although four of the six allowed the study to be conducted.)
4. Concern that laymen might become "too interested" in the matter of communications-- that inquiry

might "make the troops restless", as one clergyman described his misgivings.

5. Reluctance to permit the diversion of key laymen to any external effort at the cost of forsaking parish canvasses and other parochial functions;
6. Unwillingness to add a further burden onto an already great work load for the clergymen.

The last two reasons were observed to be common, in discussions with more than two dozen clergymen, even among those who agreed to allow work with their groups.

With the exception of one layman (who was looked upon by the author as a refreshing source of imaginativeness, but was later characterized by others as "an angry young man"), lay leaders showed two adverse reactions to the testing of words and concepts by groups with which they were associated:

1. An unwillingness to allow any intrusion into programs which had already been planned. (Inflexibility in this regard was often observed.)
2. Great hesitance to be the presenter of study sheets to a group, lest the group expect the presenter to be "the expert" in providing the "right answers". One major reason for this feeling appeared to be an uneasiness that some stigma is associated with running counter to "the correct viewpoint" which the church should hold about a

particular word or concept. (The reactions suggested elements of trying to avoid being classed as either heretical or incompletely informed.)

The Order of Presenting Objective Results

Objective results from the testing are now reported in seven sections, as follows:

1. Qualitative summaries for points of discussion, apart from numerical data. Five participating parishes and chaplaincies are represented in this description (the first five groups listed in Appendix A). The order of here presenting discussion content first is the same as encountered in the group activities, where words were discussed by groups before their data could be tabulated (also discussed after tabulation in the case of two groups which asked to continue the exploration in depth). The section on this aspect pertains to the full 16-page form (pages 146 through 173, Appendix C), and attempts to recapture some of the feeling which appeared to underlie the group participation. Content of the discussions pertains only to persons who were believed by the author to have education of two or more years at the college level.

2. Measures of understanding, as stated by the participants from a simple listing of words. Seventeen groups are represented: thirteen adult and four of high school age. (the listing in Appendix A). These numbers include the same groups that participated in detailed discussion, plus others who submitted their opinions through seminarians serving various parishes on a part-time basis in the [Episcopal] Diocese of Massachusetts. All groups referred to a simple list of 69 words (page 147, Appendix C). No effort was made to characterize educational levels of these later participants.
3. Measures of understanding as judged by selection of meanings from multiple choices. The earlier groups are judged for the full list of 69 words (pages 152 through 173, Appendix C) and the later groups for 20 selected words from that list (as indicated by asterisks on the same pages in the Appendix).
4. Comparison of lay understanding with clergy expectations.
5. A summary of predictions by seminarians, in comparison with laymen's understandings.

6. Range of understandings within groups.
7. Differences in responses among groups.

Comments Made by Participants in Group Discussions

Informal discussions on specific words led to a great variety of expressions, largely on the following 21 of the 69 words on the list:

- 3.* Christ's Ascension: The basic questions asked by persons was, "What is this term supposed to mean? Is the language symbolic, or are we to understand that it signifies a witnessed, bodily upward movement of Jesus into the sky?"
4. baptism: A frequent question was whether baptism is necessary in order for a person to be, or to be called, a Christian. No questions arose about baptism as cleansing or regeneration.
7. Christianity: Little interest was evident in the meanings of this word, but there was much question about "the requirements for one to be a Christian".
8. Christian education: A general division was evident on the two viewpoints of the mission of Christian education-- whether to teach persons to think in some particular way or to guide persons in the "problems of life".

*The same numbering sequence used in Appendix C.

10. The Church: Great interest was observed in all groups, leading in several instances to more than one session of discussion.
15. death: There was a general reluctance to discuss this word, and also frequent redefining on the papers-- usually to "the end of earthly, bodily life", or equivalent.
19. eternal life: In contrast to the reluctance to discuss death, groups were eager to discuss this concept, but almost always admitted that they did not know what to say on the subject.
21. Fellowship of the Holy Ghost: Never a suggestion from any group that a participant was willing to attempt explanation of this term.
22. God: (The author had been forewarned that many churchmen are dissatisfied with the word "God".) Never a suggestion that we seek a new name for God. Such suggestions as "Ground of Being" usually brought chuckles.
42. morals: With this word, discussion moved almost immediately to concrete situations, usually about somebody else, the training of children, or the influence of environment on changing morals conditions.

43. New Morality: "What do those new theologians mean by this term?" Groups usually associated the expression with sexual morality.
44. piety: Interest why the word has come to be generally confused with pietism. Participants seemed surprised that the word does not carry an element of "holier than thou".
47. reconciliation: General confusions why the church stresses this concept, inasmuch as the discussants felt no need for being reconciled to anybody other than a person with whom they had been ill at ease.
- 48.. redemptive fellowship: Almost complete bafflement, but also considerable interest when it was suggested that the serious discussion itself pointed toward a type of therapy, or that Alcoholics Anonymous might also exemplify such a fellowship.
50. religion: A passing interest in whether religion is "man-made".
51. resurrection of the body: "What is the term supposed to signify?... Why isn't whatever it is supposed to signify made clear?... It disturbs me to repeat this term in the creeds, when I don't know what I'm saying."

56. a sacrament: Some discussants confused the concept of symbol for that of sacrament. Feelings about the meaning of sacraments was dramatically brought to groups' attention by testimonials of persons describing "How much communion means to me... it does something... I feel lost if I don't make communion regularly."
64. The Holy Trinity: "What are the theologians fighting about on this issue?"
65. ultimate concern: On two occasions, discussions were lively, with two viewpoints representing persons who had thought a great deal on this subject and others who claimed never to have contemplated it seriously.
66. vocation: Only passing interest in the roots of the word. Some surprise that not all forms of work might be called vocations. "Dope peddling" and prostitution proved always to be sufficient examples why so general an interpretation as "whatever work we do" can be misleading.
67. Word of God: Much confusion that this term has been used to designate many things.

Written comments were supplied by fewer than ten per cent of the participants, although all were asked to make any

observations which they would offer. Representative responses were as follows:

- a. "I now have a few more definitions for my inquisitive children".
- b. "Confusin'. I have contradicted myself and found I really don't know much that I thought I did. It's a good eye opener. Teach me, O Lord."
- c. "I have heard these words or at least many of them often and have accepted them quite blindly. When I am forced to think of them I am not sure what to say."
- d. "Help!"
- e. "The new young priests should spend more time in clarifying old words than in creating new ones-- or better yet, bring back King James Version."
- f. "Whew!"
- g. "I object strongly to the interruption of our [established program]."
- h. "I believe the present Christian church's semantics very inadequate to give a child lasting understanding of God, church and man."
- i. "I am not sure I can understand the distinction between having a definition for a word and believing in the meaning for a word."

Participants' Estimates of Their Own Understanding

The preceding description of interest expressed within group discussion has been necessarily qualitative. Now, on the question of what the participants thought about their understanding, the description can be quantitative. Two measures are given:

1. The opinions of the respondents when asked about the list of 69 words, "Which words do you feel that you understand to your own satisfaction?"
2. Opinions stated when contributors were given several choices of written definitions, with the added possibilities: (a) to give another definition or (b) to indicate if the word is not understood. (The initial phase with the first six groups involved all 69 words, while the second phase with 11 groups used only 20 words from the same list.)

It is emphasized that both of these measures were statements by the respondents whether they believed that they understood the terms. (No judgment is made whether proper understandings were held, although this point is discussed later.)

All responses are presented in Appendix C, with data tabulated (Table III) on lefthand pages opposite the corresponding sheets which illustrate the test forms. These basic data for the experiment are given in the form of percentages,

of respondents in each group who stated that they did not understand the meanings of the words, that they agreed with a particular meaning listed, or that they supplied a new meaning not listed.

On the simpler question of whether or not participants believed that they had an adequate understanding of each word, a summary is given in Table IV. Three categories of responses are tabulated:

1. All participants;
2. Adult participants;
3. High school participants.

As a brief account of this tabulation:

- a) Eight words were registered by at least one-third (33 per cent) of the adults as "not understood", by either or both measures;
- b) Sixteen words were so classed by adults in at least one-fifth (20 percent) of the replies;
- c) High school students registered a greater number of words as not understood-- 14 words not understood by one-third or more of the respondents; and
- d) Twenty-six in one-fifth of the replies;
- e) Nineteen words were reported as not understood by at least 20 per cent of all respondents as follows:
"The Atonement", "Christian witness", "The Comforter", "Fellowship of the Holy Ghost", "God's

TABLE IV

SUMMARY OF LAYMEN'S OPINIONS ABOUT THEIR UNDERSTANDING
OF WORDS USED BY THE CHURCH

(Indented words were reported to be "not understood by at
least 20 per cent of all respondents.)

| | FROM A LIST OF 69 WORDS (%) | | | WHEN GIVEN CHOICES OF MEANINGS (%) | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------|--|-----------------|-------|
| | Adult | High School | Total | Adult | High School* | Total |
| 1. absolution | 7% | 9% | 8% | 2% | - | 6% |
| 2. alienation | 16 | 33 | 18 | 4 | - | 10 |
| 3. Christ's Ascension | 9 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 2 |
| 4. The Atonement | 45 | 67 | 46 | 17 | 42 | 18 |
| 5. baptism | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | - | 4 |
| 6. charity | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 | - | 2 |
| 7. Christianity | 2 | 0 | 2 | 4 | - | 6 |
| 8. Christian education | 4 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 4 |
| 9. Christian witness | 17 | 45 | 20 | 6 | - | 12 |
| 10. The Church | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 11. The Comforter | 15 | 12 | 14 | 29 | - | 30 |
| 12. commitment | 11 | 12 | 11 | 2 | - | 10 |
| 13. communion | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 |
| 14. covenant | 17 | 29 | 18 | 4 | - | 18 |
| 15. death | 1 | 0 | 1 | 7 | - | 10 |
| 16. ecumenical | 12 | 26 | 14 | 6 | - | 12 |
| 17. disciple | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | - | 4 |
| 18. discipline | 2 | 10 | 3 | 4 | - | 8 |
| 19. eternal life | 9 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 5 |
| 20. faith | 2 | 0 | 1 | 6 | - | 4 |
| 21. Fellowship of the Holy Ghost | 26 | 29 | 26 | 18 | 27 | 16 |
| 22. God | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | - | 4 |
| 23. God's will | 5 | 5 | 5 | 20 | - | 21 |
| 24. gospel | 2 | 7 | 2 | 2 | - | 6 |
| 25. grace | 8 | 7 | 8 | 17 | 20 | 15 |

* (-) indicates that this word was not used in short form tests.

TABLE IV (continued)

| | FROM THE LIST (%) | | | WHEN GIVEN CHOICES (%) | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------|---------------------------|----------------|-------|
| | Adult | High School | Total | Adult | High School | Total |
| 26. guilt | 3% | 5% | 3% | 4% | 5% | 4% |
| 27. holy scriptures | 4 | 5 | 4 | 6 | - | 8 |
| 28. Holy Ghost | 6 | 5 | 6 | 4 | - | 8 |
| 29. humility | 4 | 21 | 7 | 4 | - | 12 |
| 30. The Incarnation | 12 | 31 | 14 | 12 | 20 | 11 |
| 31. "in Christ" | 14 | 29 | 16 | 37 | - | 39 |
| 32. inspiration | 2 | 5 | 2 | 6 | - | 8 |
| 33. justice | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 34. justification by faith | 39 | 48 | 31 | 42 | - | 46 |
| 35. Kingdom of God | 6 | 5 | 6 | 11 | 5 | 9 |
| 36. laity | 10 | 31 | 13 | 2 | - | 10 |
| 37. language of the Church | 12 | 31 | 15 | 4 | - | 16 |
| 38. love | 2 | 0 | 1 | 12 | - | 12 |
| 39. materialism | 7 | 24 | 9 | 4 | - | 8 |
| 40. to minister | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 2 |
| 41. mission | 2 | 10 | 2 | 6 | - | 6 |
| 42. morals | 3 | 10 | 4 | 10 | - | 12 |
| 43. New Life | 24 | 5 | 21 | 40 | - | 40 |
| 44. New Morality | 20 | 52 | 24 | 46 | - | 58 |
| 45. original sin | 21 | 31 | 22 | 17 | - | 19 |
| 46. piety | 23 | 36 | 24 | 18 | - | 22 |
| 47. reconciliation | 14 | 43 | 18 | 2 | - | 10 |
| 48. redemption | 12 | 19 | 12 | 15 | 7 | 11 |
| 49. redemptive fellowship | 47 | 62 | 48 | 42 | 51 | 52 |
| 50. religion | 2 | 0 | 1 | 8 | - | 6 |
| 51. religionless Christianity | 30 | 40 | 31 | 52 | - | 56 |
| 52. repentance | 4 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| 53. resurrection of the body | 15 | 7 | 13 | 17 | 5 | 12 |
| 54. divine revelation | 25 | 50 | 27 | 18 | 33 | 17 |
| 55. righteousness | 7 | 7 | 7 | 18 | - | 22 |
| 56. a sacrament | 4 | 0 | 3 | 4 | - | 10 |
| 57. salvation | 4 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 24 | 9 |
| 58. sanctify | 7 | 10 | 11 | 15 | 2 | 10 |
| 59. secularism | 12 | 76 | 37 | 18 | - | 20 |
| 60. sin | 3 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 6 |
| 61. soul | 3 | 0 | 3 | 12 | - | 12 |
| 62. stewardship | 26 | 62 | 27 | 12 | 36 | 13 |
| 63. theology | 2 | 14 | 4 | 0 | - | 2 |
| 64. The Holy Trinity | 7 | 5 | 2 | 4 | - | 12 |
| 65. ultimate concern | 35 | 64 | 38 | 45 | - | 53 |
| 66. vocation | 2 | 10 | 3 | 0 | - | 6 |
| 67. Word of God | 5 | 3 | 5 | 4 | - | 6 |
| 68. world, flesh and devil | 20 | 40 | 25 | 28 | - | 30 |
| 69. worship | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6 | - | 6 |

will", "in Christ", "justification by faith", "New Life", "New Morality", "original sin", "piety", "redemptive fellowship", "religionless Christianity", "divine revelation", "righteousness", "secularism", "stewardship", "ultimate concern", and "world, flesh and devil".

All words, it should be recalled, are from a list which 30 persons had agreed previously are being "used by the church".

The two method of sampling opinions on understanding do not show a particularly close correlation. Two major reasons seem probable. First, a clearly stated choice of meaning often gave participants enough reassurance for them to make a choice rather than to indicate a lack of understanding. (This experience points to the suspicion that the context in which a word is used can help one's understanding. However, it should also be remembered that careless usage can confuse understanding.) On the other hand, there were a number of examples in which the need to select a particular meaning brought the participants to a realization that no definite understanding was held by them. A good example of better understanding when given choices is provided by "The Atonement", which 46 per cent checked on the simple list as not understood, whereas only 18 per cent responded that way with a choice of meanings that included "Christ's propitiation for our sins". Other terms, typified by "redemptive fellowship", were stated to be not understood on both bases.

(A digression is necessary at this point to indicate the outcome of three other ways in which the question was asked, namely whether the participants felt (a) free to use the words in discussion groups, (b) able to explain them to a non-Christian of the same age and background as themselves, and (c) capable of explaining the words to a child or godchild of any age (pages 147 through 150, Appendix C). These additional questions were asked only at the beginning of the study, and significant trends were not evident in the limited testing. It appeared that individuals who had experienced free and open discussion earlier in groups were willing to include virtually the entire list as understood well enough for their own use in discussions, whereas newcomers to group experiences were more cautious, and felt unwilling to discuss words which they felt that they did not already understand. The strongest feelings developed when persons were asked about explaining the terms to children--and here there was sometimes an attitude of complete defeat or a belligerence about being expected to do so (although expectations on the part of the leader were never mentioned). Further detailed studies into reasons for the types of reactions could prove to be very informative. This could not be done in the time usually available for the already long list of words, and particularly without compromising the promised anonymity. The use of these optional statements

[willingness to use the words in discussions, ability to explain to other adults, and ability to describe to children] was dropped after being used with the first two groups.

Judgments of Understanding, Based upon the Meanings Selected

It may now be asked whether the respondents did in fact select from multiple choice lists those meanings which indicated a clear understanding of the sample words. The answer to this question depends strongly upon what meanings are satisfactory to which judges, and which responses would be considered correct by this measure. On this point there is a great deal of disagreement. Clergymen by no means agreed on which answers they hoped their parishioners would give, as will be discussed in the next section. For the present, it is interesting to note some opinions in which a considerable fraction of persons departed from traditional interpretations:

1. absolution: "...by one's own conscience";
31 percent of 57 persons.
11. The Comforter: "Jesus, the Good Shepherd";
26 per cent of 57 persons.
19. eternal life: "immortality of the soul";
56 per cent of 306 persons.
26. guilt: devoid of the sense of responsibility,
made equivalent to remorse or anxiety; 66 per cent
of 306 persons.

- 46. piety: "sanctimoniousness", evidently from the confusion of piety for pietism; 29 per cent of 57 persons.
- 52. repentance: regret; 32 per cent of 306 persons.
- 53. resurrection of the body: release of the soul; 23 per cent of 306 persons.
- 61. soul: "the indestructible part of man"; 29 per cent of 57 persons.
- 62. stewardship: "service to God"; 52 per cent of 306 persons.
- 66. vocation: "whatever work we do"; 53 per cent of 57 persons.

The above list includes only those interpretations which the author believes to be generally accepted in the Episcopal Church. It does not include interpretations which might be the result of other views that remain from earlier teaching now abandoned. Personal sentiment enters here somewhat, as the author points to the following illustrations:

- 24. gospel: "the good news", otherwise not characterized; 50 per cent of 57 persons.
- 54. religion: belief in [God]; 38 per cent of 57 persons.
- 57. salvation: the escapist views; 48 per cent of 306 persons.
- 59. secularism: worldliness; 46 per cent of 57 persons.

60. sin: implying the ability to know God's will;
36 per cent of 306 persons.

The full range of usages can be seen in Table III, Appendix C.

The content of discussions added considerable insight into the bases on which particular meanings were preferred-- reasons that are not apparent from the numerical statistics. Two examples should suffice. First, the meaning of "The Atonement" was often given as "Christ's propitiation for our sins", although no discussions produced interpretations which would suggest that the atonement was for the purpose of pacifying an angry God, as the word "propitiation" connotes. (Judged on the basis of discussions, churchmen somehow managed instead to hold the view of expiation-- as an offering to compensate for an offense-- despite the usage in the service of Holy Communion in the Book of Common Prayer: "and he is the propitiation for our sins"!)

The second example is "The Church", for which many responses were given as "the Body of Christ": but subsequent discussions seldom brought out a clear interpretation-- although in several instances it became apparent that the choice intended by the selecting persons was "the body of which Christ is the head...". Indeed, the consistently vigorous discussions on the subject of the church usually found the participants referring to the church as "they", an ill-defined hierarchy of persons in "headquarters", as

the federal government is often summarily described as "them in Washington".

Comparison of Lay Understanding with Clergy Expectations

Now some clergy responses are presented to assess whether laymen's understanding of words came up to expectations. Immediately, it must be asked, "Whose expectation?". The general reactions of lay participants was that they were rather humbled and somewhat embarrassed, but willing to come to grips with reality. But did the responses meet the expectations of clergymen who have been attempting in their preaching and teaching to bring out specific aspects of the words and concepts? Eight clergymen were asked in advance to indicate which responses they hoped would be forthcoming from their congregations, and these responses were compared with the data which were obtained from laymen. Only a relative measure of agreement was sought-- not whether the clergyman or his congregation was right or wrong, but merely to determine whether both were thinking the same general ideas when a particular concept might be mentioned in a sermon or discussion. All of the clergymen asked to participate did so (although others were not asked when an unwillingness was already evident).

Considerable variation was observed for lay-clergy agreement, using the measure simply of whether the clergymen

had selected the major responses given to particular words by the laymen. For the full list, agreement between clergymen and adults was 30, 40, 51, 56, 65, and 70 per cent in the six comparisons which were possible. Agreement in only two cases attempted between clergymen and high school students was only 5 and 33 per cent in two comparisons! (Again it is emphasized that these results do not indicate poor instruction on the part of the clergy or denseness on the part of the congregation-- but at least there can be seen an impediment in the communication process.)

A Summary of Predictions by Seminarians

As a variant of the measure just described for the clergy-lay agreement, a similar measure was made for seminarians who attempted to select from a list of 16 words the six which they thought would be the most frequently stated by laymen to be not understood. Forty-six of 127 seminarians who were asked to participate did so. Of this number, only two predicted all six of the most troublesome words, while two seminarians picked only one of the six words correctly. Other degrees of success are noted in Table V, which also indicates that juniors (first-year students) predicted more accurately than the middler class, who in turn bettered the seniors. (The average number of the six words picked by men in the three classes were 4.2

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF SEMINARIANS' PREDICTIONS OF TROUBLESOME

WORDS WITH SELECTIONS BY LAYMEN

NOTES about the method of selecting these data:

- a) Laymen marked words which were not understood by them.
- b) Author selected 16 words from the list of 69, prior to laymen's selections.
- c) Seminarians each selected six words from the list of 16 which they predicted would be most often not understood.

| WORDS: | <u>LAYMEN</u> | | <u>SEMINARIANS</u> | |
|------------------------------|---|---------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| | % Marked as Not Understood among 69 Words | Ranking | Ranking | % Marking as One of Six Choices |
| redemptive fellowship | 74% | 1 | 3 | 59% |
| New Morality | 72 | 2 | 5 tie | 46 |
| ultimate concern | 70 | 3 | 5 tie | 46 |
| Fellowship of the Holy Ghost | 56 | 4 | 2 | 83 |
| The Atonement | 50 | 5 | 1 | 85 |
| The Incarnation | 42 | 6 | 7 | 48 |
| secularism | 30 | 7 tie | 10 | 26 |
| world, flesh and devil | 30 | 7 tie | 13 | 26 |
| resurrection of the body | 26 | 9 | 4 | 54 |
| ecumenical | 22 | 10 | 14 tie | 17 |
| Kingdom of God | 20 | 11 | 9 | 30 |
| Holy Ghost | 12 | 12 | 8 | 41 |
| God's will | 8 | 13 tie | 14 tie | 17 |
| gospel | 8 | 13 tie | 16 | 8 |
| theology | 6 | 15 | 12 | 20 |
| salvation | 2 | 16 | 11 | 22 |

for the juniors, 3.5 for the middler students, and 3.1 for the seniors.) This outcome suggests that skill in using theological jargon within the seminary environment is accompanied by some loss of sensitivity to the understandings held by laymen.*

Perhaps the most significant result of this experiment was that the group of 46 as a whole predicted the outcome of lay response fairly well, although individual seminarians often were very unsuccessful in their predictions. (This finding suggests that a clergyman could effectively check his opinions either among laymen or in a large group of fellow clergymen to determine most of the words which he would likely use without conveying understanding. Thus such a method might be an informative, though indirect, way to estimate the effectiveness of communication in a given type of pastoral circumstance.)

*Richard Weaver's opinion about a similar situation with graduate social scientists is somewhat pointed: "A display of familiarity with the language is popularly taken as a sign of orthodoxy and acceptance, and thus there arises a temptation to use the special nomenclature freely even when one has doubts about its aptness. This condition affects especially the young ones who are seeking recognition and establishment."²⁰

²⁰Richard M. Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1953), p. 206.

Range of Responses within Groups

If there is a single indication in this study that a need exists for extensive effort on local problems of communicating the gospel, it probably can be seen in the fact that within congregations there is a great difference in understanding of basic concepts in Christian teachings. The extent of this difference can become obvious through detailed study of the data presented in Appendix C.

Only a few examples need to be given here of some concepts which are received with about equal emphasis on more than one understanding, such as:

3. Christ's Ascension: between the aspect of bodily disappearance from earth and the acknowledgment that Christ is Lord.
8. Christian education: between an enterprise to teach persons to think "Christianly" and as guidance in living.
10. The Church: between the concepts of the church as the body of Christ and as a segment of humanity within whom the Holy Spirit works.

These are but three examples, to which can be added "absolution", "ecumenical", "faith", "Fellowship of the Holy Ghost"-- and a number of others, as reference to Appendix C will demonstrate.

Such a range of understandings might not be surprising to the experienced pastor but it does suggest to others that some of the major teachings of Christianity are by no means being communicated. One has only to note the great differences in understandings of "salvation" and "sin" to realize the extent of the distortion. Christianity as the gospel of salvation is thought of essentially as an escape device by most of the persons responding to these questions. It would seem that some future preaching needs not merely to describe what Christianity is, but also what it is not. The data gained through this study merely presents a few specific examples.

Differences of Responses among Groups

Some of the most extreme variation observed in the study are the radically different interpretations of concepts from group to group. Among adults, perhaps the greatest spread is observed for "stewardship", which some groups understand as a "responsible handling of one's goods and talents", whereas others overwhelmingly understand it to mean "service to God". Much spread among groups is also to be observed for "Christ's Ascension", "The Comforter", "Fellowship of the Holy Ghost", "grace", "justice", "redemptive fellowship", "repentance", "sin", and "soul"

Summary

Hopefully, the observations reported in this chapter can speak as effectively as any possible summarizing remarks. Before the discussion moves on, however, some recollections are offered:

1. The study has been a limited experiment in terms of words, participants, method, and interpretation.
2. A few key words have been examined, with the finding that some are well understood and others greatly misunderstood.
3. Words are considered important by persons who are trying to hear what Christ and Christianity have to say to them.
4. Laymen are very eager to examine the status of communications within the church, if the opportunity is constructively given.
5. Lack of interest evident on the part of clergy or lay leadership can be devastating in any effort to hear opinions of persons who might otherwise describe their understanding.

CHAPTER VI

REDEMPTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

"If ministers periodically examined their church members as professors examine their classes, they would find that a man can be in the rain a long time and not become wetter under the skin."
(Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel)²¹

The statistics about church expressions presented in the preceding chapter point to fundamental and general difficulties in communications. Concepts which are basic to the gospel message are, by the assessments of listeners-- and further verified by other measures-- not being understood. The present study cannot responsibly stop with a simple inquiry about the language, for some of the implications must also be considered. This additional step is taken with some misgiving, for it involves generalizations and perhaps, unwittingly, some ill-founded judgments. However, the intent is not primarily to point out defects or to suggest their origins, in either vocabulary or some of the attitudes about correcting major deficiencies.

The reader can conclude for himself that the words which have been examined here are only a fraction of those words both commonly used and important in the Christian

²¹Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917), p. 16.

message. It could be pointed out, as other writers are doing for various reasons,²² that the concepts which underlie the key words are borne within a matrix of other verbal expressions that seem at first glance not to affect understanding one way or another. It could be argued by some well-informed readers that many of the nonessential terms are a priceless heritage from ancient sources, but others could contend with equal conviction that they are mere "collector's items"--true neither to the spirit of the scriptural meaning nor to modern forms of expression. Much could be made in complaining about the feature of a long heritage from the King James Version of the Bible (1611) or even the 1928 version of the Book of Common Prayer as used in the United States of America-- the latter with psalms from the "Great Bible" of 1539 and such expressions as "vouchsafe to bless and sanctify"; "Comfortable Words" (which term wrongly now gives more a feeling of tranquilizing than of strengthening or energizing); or Psalm 68 with "letteth the runagates continue in scarceness".

Whereas some churchmen may look upon outdated language as "religious" while others view it as inexcusably outside the language of the present time, all who seek to draw meaning

²²e.g., Pierre Berton, The Comfortable Pew (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1965).

therefrom should admit that it both dilutes the central words and suggests some lack of concern about the problem. But antiquity is not the only violator. Time-worn expressions such as "original sin" or "providence" are used as a matter of choice by some spokesmen, although most persons have dropped them from use. New concepts, exemplified by "New Morality", "religionless Christianity" or "ultimate concern", have not been accepted into the vocabulary of most listeners. The problem is complex, to say the least.

In the face of a seemingly hopeless situation, important questions arise about courses of remedial action which must be faced both by the church at large, by individual pastors and by other Christians. It might be remarked by objectors that the conclusions drawn from the present work are not representative, that only a few words have been appraised out of context with other words, away from the structure of a worship service or teaching environment, and only in terms of words separate from a supportive framework of other communications, such as music, or art or tone of voice. Such criticisms are to be expected, for indeed no claim is made that this work has been anything beyond an initial investigation. It has sought a partial answer to one important question into which pastoral concerns must also inquire by other methods and in other details. That question is, "What is the situation in the church's communications?"

It has become apparent that many persons have asked the same question in the past but, evidently, few have seriously attempted to answer it by objective methods. The starting point for discussions in the remainder of this chapter can be that a simple attempt at objective study demonstrates present communication to be poor on the meanings of basic Christian concepts. If responsibilities are to be faced, they must be both individual and joint responsibilities. Neither by itself will suffice. All communication is two-sided.

If the church is to accept its divine commission to present a saving message-- a message which can make persons whole and aware of new wholeness-- it must do so in a way that persons can understand, and that way involves mutual understanding. This is, by no means, to imply that individual messengers have only responsibilities but no rights in setting Christian examples, and one fundamental right is to understand to the best of one's abilities the nature of the message in words. Often persons in America are finding, even with slight exposure to Christianity, that it can be intellectually stimulating.²³ As emphasis is placed more

²³Helen Khoobyar, Facing Adult Problems in Christian Education (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 98.

and more on "the ministry of the laity", the resistance will undoubtedly increase against merely repeating the words which have been spoken over the centuries. For example, there is a mildly incongruous aspect to expecting a scientist to act as a teaching minister before he has been able to "make his peace" with words that he cannot explain even to himself. The intellectual honesty which is practiced in his secular life will not allow such an approach.

It might appear that a sweepingly revised vocabulary is being advocated for use within the church. Such is far from the case, for we believe that much of the vocabulary is about as simple as it can become (and indeed is no more specialized than the words used in other aspects of life. On the latter point, one has only to consider the sports pages of almost any American newspaper to recognize that an almost unbelievably complex jargon is readily understood by readers who have an interest in the contents of those pages.) Moreover, the question can be asked, "To what other words would the present troublesome words be changed?" Would sin be more meaningful if the term were changed, or would repentance be practiced more seriously if it were called by another name? Even if an entirely new vocabulary should be introduced, the problems would be countless. Helen Khoobyar touches some of the problems as follows:

"We may substitute "courage to be" for "justification by faith", "new being" for "salvation", or we may use "meeting" instead of "confrontation", "personal" for "existential". Crude metaphors such as "thrownness" or "the isness of it all" may break through the protective barricades of specialized jargon, and intrigue people for a while. But we should also remember that if the language of the Bible is remote for men today, this new language is even more remote. To emulate secular ideas by "inventing" new terminology that is Christianly unrecognizable is to defeat our purpose. It would certainly seem far easier to clarify meaning to laymen by explaining the language of the Bible than by replacing it by a more difficult way of speaking. Even the new terms by which we explain are subject to the ambiguity of our personal experience and cultural settings. Further, after the novelty wears off, we are still left confronted with great symbolic and mythical truths: 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth', 'And the Word became flesh', 'God was in Christ' . . . These statements enshrine the deepest mystery of the Christian faith because they refer to something beyond human existence. They need to be interpreted and made intelligible in such a way as to allow room for differences of individual interpretations and thought forms."²⁴

A Need for Repentance in Communications

Although it might seem "churchy" and trite to state, the needed corrective in communications is clearly that of drastic reorientation, an action very like-- or perhaps identically-- repentance. Some persons must themselves want to understand. All must want to communicate and be willing "to work out their own salvations", as St. Paul has taught in Philippians 2:12. As educators learn more clearly

²⁴Ibid, p. 134.

each year, there must be an element of readiness on the part of any would-be learner. This is surely part of the childlike openness about which Jesus spoke. The uniqueness of Christianity-- its differences from other human expression-- is such that individuals and groups of persons alike, including the church itself, must undergo a reorientation. The penitent, here as elsewhere, must feel the need for change, the desire to alter an existing situation, and some action to initiate the change.

If repentance is the course to be followed, what is the basic lack making a change necessary? Most prominent in this particular study-- regrettably by its absence-- has been the failure by the church (that is, various bodies of all persons professing to be Christians) to show by way of example some of the many possible ways of making needed changes. On the issue of communications, the needed action would seem to come necessarily from joint action, for this is the essence of communications. A joint effort to clarify communications could dramatically demonstrate Christian witness in the illustrative action of showing the way of repentance. Failing to do so jointly, the church fails to demonstrate a conviction that men can and must participate in the divine creative function of salvation. Individuals within the church are often reminded of their responsibility to set individual examples, but often the church does not set

the corporate example. On the matter of Christian witness, for example, we have only to consider the words on the list of 69 used in this study. The understandings by members should indicate how well any particular parish or institutional ministry demonstrates its belief in the virtue or necessity of "charity", "commitment", "discipleship", "discipline", "guilt", "humility"-- and the list is not even half recalled! Corporate witness, then, appears to us an adequate description of the church's attitudinal deficiency.

Where can the church's repentance begin? Realistically, it can most readily begin through its leadership. But already a solution is being sought, without considering the state of the penitent. The first step in repentance is to acknowledge the state of affairs. On the basis of this study, there seems to be little question that the difficulty lies both in leadership and in those who are not leaders. Whereas laymen in general have been both conservative and passive in their search for understanding, clergymen and lay leaders have appeared to be likewise. The indifference of both is as truly a hardening of the heart as that mentioned in the Bible. Both sides of the hoped-for communication obviously would need to be examined somewhat further in each actual instance. For this study, we can merely report the observations made here, and forego excessive speculation.

If one seeks to locate responsibilities for a continuing poor communication within the church, it is perhaps too easy to point with impatience to the clergy, for here indeed is the acknowledged leadership. At the same time, it must be admitted that informal leadership is not straining to assert itself. Undoubtedly many a clergyman prays regularly for the appearance of laymen who will assume leadership. But the wait might often be endless, hence the action necessarily to be taken in the absence of fully trained assistance is to give a freer hand to laymen showing any real interest. This recommendation arises not from a personal assessment of situations in a range of circumstances which we have not experienced, but from the pervasive feeling by laymen that "professionals" do not trust the ability of adult laymen to work constructively on the intellectual content of Christianity without some continuous surveillance. The impasse is formidable: clergy hesitant to give free rein to laymen and laymen hesitant to seek or accept the reins. Both give poor testimony for a church which speaks an emphasis on faith, yet seems not to practice trust of an elementary sort, whether in selves or in others. It also brings to mind the right of the church to continue preaching on the text of "the wicked and slothful servant" in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) when failure to allow expression of real talent is taught by actual example. Or, it might be asked, does

not trust find a place in the teaching by the Lord, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me"?-- surely trust is as truly meant as the cup of water or the binding of wounds. (Matthew 25:45, coincidentally following the Parable of the Talents.)

Again on the laymen's side of joint endeavors, there appears an impatience to "accomplish something" in meetings, to see results, particularly on the part of men. If the effort is on the issue of Christian education, there arises the urge to confirm from statements of a trained clergyman that the conclusions of a group are in accord with the broad framework of Christian doctrine. There might appear in the early meetings of groups a seeming "pooling of ignorance", as one skeptical participant of an all-laymen group stated to the author several years ago, but continued work together can change into growth together.

All of these thoughts and a host of others can be mentioned about almost any assemblage of persons attempting jointly to gain deeper understanding of what Christianity is now saying and can be saying. But the burdens and rewards alike in Christianity are that the deep understanding comes largely through persons working together. Both the clergyman who is worried about some partly informed laymen "rocking the boat" or the laymen who is concerned about appearing ill-informed to his fellows must recall that the real communicator

is the Holy Spirit, and he is present when two or three are gathered together in his name. The demand made of Christians is great, but the divine assistance always exceeds the demand. Each Babel experience can repeat the early Christian experience of Pentecost if we recognize this divine source.

Specific Needs to Enable Improved Communications

Modern church writers frequently remind us that a man cannot be a Christian in isolation. We need also to remind ourselves that we cannot become Christians in isolation. Both aspects of Christian living need the help of other persons, and other persons introduce the need for communications--and communication means that each person must express himself. Thus it is important to recall a few of the central elements in communications which have become evident in this study. These findings do not appear explicitly in the statistical data, but they have come most clearly into focus as efforts have been made to interpret the responses made in writing and speech by many laymen, clergymen, and seminarians. Some of the conclusions follow:

- (a) The utter necessity for a listening ministry by clergy and laity alike has been very obvious in the study.
- (b) Communications cannot proceed effectively until persons seeking to communicate have some recognition

of the situation as it actually is, not merely as they wish it to be.

(c) Repetition is of limited value, but rephrasing of ideas and concepts can accomplish effective communications.

(d) Clergy and laity alike tend to seek out some form of expression which is "loyal" to the church-- that is to say, loyal to what the traditional interpretation is believed to be. This tendency is often a serious barrier to communications.

(e) The environments of small groups provide the essential elements for introducing persons to their own involvement in divine salvation.

Some explanatory remarks are now added on these aspects of communications as they relate to the church.

Listening Ministries

Despite the periodic reminder that all Christians are "called to minister", many public gatherings of the church give the opposite impression or example. Preaching, the most highly regarded form of teaching within much of Protestantism, is conducted almost always as monologue, formalized by the elevated and often boxed pulpits, held within narrow time limits, almost free of visual aids, often "safe", uncontroversial blends of candor and reserve. If there is a

listening ministry at work under such circumstances, it is primarily that of the congregation supplying an attentive ear to the preacher. This is appropriate, for a sermon represents a considerable effort in preparation: and the other side of the issue is that the clergy should be as attentive in listening to the congregation. Lacking some reliable feedback about the effectiveness of the endeavor, a frequent tendency is to seek a common denominator in expression-- some insurance that the message will not completely elude the younger or simpler of the congregation, while retaining some challenge for those who are intellectually more sophisticated. One ultimate result of such a leveling philosophy can be found in the demeaning quality of some television productions. Marshall McLuhan discusses the problem of mass media in communications in a recent book²⁵ whose first chapter title might describe equally well a growing attitude about formal church services: "The Medium is the Message". McLuhan says bluntly that the content of much broadcast entertainment has become so stereotyped that it is virtually without an explicit message, and that the audience consists primarily of those who listen and watch because a broadcast is available to hear and see-- for little other reason. The warnings to be found in this commercial

²⁵Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), Chap. I.

broadcasting experience are that the church's message might be likewise devoid of meaningful content, and that the gospel message is very unlikely to be carried in any one-way system, regardless of the "gimmicks" which might be used.

On Assessing Situations

Facing now the second conclusion, how does one recognize a situation "as it actually is", not to mention the difficulty of assessing and accepting the situation? Whose heart is hardened under particular circumstances? How genuine is interest in the content of the message? Who is doing what because it is "his bounden duty"? Who is guilty of intellectualizing? Who is seeking only emotional content in Christianity? But, it can be asked, who is to judge, who is required to be realistic about a given situation? At least one point is evident-- that both sides in the verbal exchange must attempt some meeting of understanding if there is to be communication. Communication has the nature of dialogue. A congregation should no more expect to "be taught" than they should be willing to learn, nor should a teacher launch into an answering of questions which have not been asked.

In the course of this study, as surely must be the case in virtually all meetings for discussion, the necessity has appeared for "clearing the decks" of miscellaneous subject matter before other matters can be pursued effectively.

Such effort is particularly necessary if communication is to take place among most members of any group. For example, every group with which the author has dealt in open discussions has expressed interest in ethical questions, particularly where parental concerns are expressed. Second in frequency have been questions of church custom. One of the most often-asked questions has been, "Why are women expected to wear hats in church?" Such questions might be interpreted by a group leader as irrelevant intrusions into a carefully prepared body of material, but the leader who permits such airing will have begun to face the reality of some deeper concerns which have been held back until a friendly situation allowed the questioners to speak freely. In so far as environments for such beginnings are concerned, the study has confirmed the spirited writings which more and more are recalling that small groups provide an excellent medium for raising and discussing questions--²⁶ sometimes with success in answering questions which have been almost impossible to ask under more formal circumstances. But other aspects of reality are that all questions are not answered simply by discussing them, any more than maturity is attained simply by talking about growing up; and, moreover, many persons cannot be drawn into groups.

²⁶e.g., Casteel, op. cit. and Ernsberger, op. cit.

From the clergyman's viewpoint, group discussions can be either an opportunity or simply another burden. Both attitudes were seen in the present study. According to David Ernsberger, "Ministers who say, 'But we haven't time for this', . . . should take a closer look at the history of the church. The church began with small groups of disciples."²⁷ But beyond the argument of historical precedence, hearing the voices of a parish provides a personal basis for pastoral care of which group teaching and preaching are only formal aspects. Simply on the topic of words, this study has revealed a number of categories which say a great deal about understanding. All of the following were brought into discussion because one or more participants were interested enough to inquire:

1. Some terms were categorized by the discussants as generally meaningless to them: "cherubim and seraphim"; "The Church Triumphant"; "principalities and powers"; "sacristy"; "eschatology"; "oblation".
2. Others were noted as frequently misunderstood "God's chosen people"; "Christ's passion"; "IHS"; "Law and Prophets"; "liturgy"; "mass"; "mystical"; "myth"; "testament"; "unction"; "consecration";

²⁷Ernsberger, op. cit., pp. 105-106.

"The Way"; "tithe"; "universal salvation".

3. Multi-meaning was the description applied to:
"The Cross"; "justify"; "The Church Fathers";
"God's Holy Word".
4. Some words were described as outdated: "election";
"providence"; "Comfortable Words"; "mediator".
5. Other words were too new: "concern"; "relevance";
"existential"; "ground of being".

This cross-section of words might appear to be the beginning of a list which could include virtually every word used in worship and teaching of the church. Obviously, all words cannot be abandoned simply because they are not understood by some members of a congregation. However, awareness of frequently troublesome words should help to make communications more effective and more helpful (let us say therapeutic) in their contributions to Christian life. Listening to opinions is one effective way to accomplish this informing process, and appealing directly to the listeners themselves (as, for example, in this study) can initiate the real two-way listening which is as important in communications as two-way speaking.

The Importance of Redundancy

Now, what of the element of repetition of the same information; can sufficient repetition provide a lasting

understanding? As an affirmative response, it must be conceded that some of the most treasured expressions of worship services are those portions of scripture which have been so often repeated that they are committed to memory. These recollected words can be the comfort of the dying or of the person too sick to pray, or the bridge leading from childhood to the adult who no longer feels a tie to the church. Repetition has a long tradition in Hebrew and Christian teaching by means of catechisms. But within the same traditions has been the practice of seeking the meanings behind the words. This search has been largely through the minds of other persons. Men have found that the meaning of the Bible to them is deepened by studying the interpretations of other men. The long Hebrew tradition is particularly rich in such commentaries; and this practice has also been adopted by the church, although some movements within Christianity have sought to define a single correct interpretation for a particular biblical passage.

The Bible itself is short on elaboration, but there are clearly present some efforts to explain. In the New Testament, for example, Paul brings out several aspects of Christ's atoning act. It is a difficult task for any man to give an explanation, and Paul resorts to metaphors throughout. He says, in essence, that what Christ did for us is like what

occurs when a slave is freed by the payment of money²⁸ (the slave cannot buy his own freedom) . . . is like a judge freeing guilty men in a court of law²⁹ (salvation is not merely a matter of law or of argument) . . . is like victory in battle³⁰ (Christ has not been passive in our salvation) . . . is like the sacrifice of the best that one has for others³¹ (his life was given for us). Do these various explanations help or confuse the explanation? Whatever our reaction to Paul's product, we must credit him with a serious effort to clarify a concept which is basic to our understanding of the mission of Christ in the world. He evidently realized that no single explanation could adequately describe this divine mission. Whereas many other men in the history of Christianity have championed a single explanation, and have refined and narrowed that view to the extreme, Paul's approach is much like the use of redundancy which has been mentioned earlier as necessary for reliable communication. Significantly, in each metaphor, Paul used an experience which was familiar to the people of his time.*

²⁸Romans 3:24 ²⁹Romans 5:18

³⁰I Corinthians 15:24; Colossians 2:15 ³¹Romans 3:25

*Somewhat curiously, the predominant opinion expressed in this study (i.e., as a propitiation for our sins) comes from the metaphor about sacrifice-- certainly out of keeping with present-day practice.)

It is probably trite to emphasize that repetition is often necessary in the learning process, and proves to be disadvantageous only when used to extremes. Some persons who regularly attend church where a specified form of worship is used will find, to their embarrassment on occasions, that a portion of the services will have passed with their having no memory of its passage. In this sense great familiarity does breed some tacit contempt. The same has been noted often in the comprehension of terms with often-recited expressions such as the Lord's Prayer or the Apostles' Creed. During this study, it was several times remarked that the discussions had for the first time in the memory of some of the participants caused them to reflect upon the meanings of words that they had thoughtlessly been reciting since childhood. Repetition had for years facilitated the recall of content, but had hardened understanding. The sharing of interpretations, hopefully, started the deepening of understanding.

It seems unlikely that redundancy should be unfamiliar to the preaching profession which has been willing to espouse the wise counsel on preaching or public speaking-- the three basic "rules": "Tell them what you're going to say; say it; then tell them what you said." This is redundancy in an acceptable sense. The failure in such an approach lies in lack of inquiry about what has been understood. In the words

of information theory, the element of feedback is needed.

What, then, is the nature of the redundancy which the author recommends? The answer must include the admission that no single system or combination will insure understanding by the hearer. But it is our conviction that inquiry about the status of understanding in local circumstances will reveal how much rephrasing of the teachings is necessary in each situation. The method thereafter would need to be a series of new beginnings, from each reassessment. These new beginnings will involve not only new modes of expression, but new persons doing the expressing. Such beginnings will be a real working out of joint repentance-- for such repeated beginning is the nature of repentance-- and the realization of communication which will have the nature of personal communion.

The Urge to Be Loyal

Since its beginnings, the church has been on guard lest its message be corrupted by "false prophets" or by others who would make the practice of Christianity a mere intellectual assent to certain doctrine. Loyalty to the teachings of Jesus Christ and of the scriptural record has often been a necessity born of real threat. But, it can be asked, does one never change lest he be considered disloyal? Such a tendency could also pose a real danger-- one which we believe

accounts for much of the unwillingness to change one's public expressions. Each person resorting always to a fixed vocabulary must answer for himself whether he is concerned with faithful interpretation of the gospel or in finding personal security in an effective defense afforded by specialized language. This whole problem touches the issue of redundancy in communications, and it is here also that some ethical problems loom large.

On the matter of ethics, the Christian is held responsible to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have not heard it (that is, comprehended it), whether those persons be the unchurched atheist or the long-time churchman, or himself! At the same time, one must not use any technique as an end in communications, even if such means would bring many persons into the organized structure of the church. Nor does the teacher shatter all "literalistic" teachings (not even the Garden of Eden myth) without assuming at the same time the additional role of enlightenment. The sanctity of individual interpretations is also to be observed-- indeed such interpretations should be shared as much as differences in personality. Manipulation of other is unfair, whether by meaningless rhetoric, by maintenance of ignorance, or by the exciting methods of modern group dynamics.

Redundancy must be used, therefore, with certain important limitations, ethical and other. What of the opposite direction-- away from limitations and toward freedom? Paul has reminded us that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.(2 Corinthians 3:17). This freedom must surely include the daring and imaginativeness which the Spirit urges in making known the gospel of Jesus Christ. Surely there are as many ways to tell about the gospel of love as there are to tell a wife of one's love for her. Both must be done on a personal basis, for neither is merely a statement of fact. A marriage license confirms little of the relationship. The Bible is only one confirmation that Jesus is the source of truth, and the church must have its foundation in the Lord and not in the book alone, nor in the orthodoxy of language. Therein is the test of loyalty in communicating the gospel.

An Analogy between Group Experiences and Other Healing

These prolonged discussions and the study which they describe would not meet their major purpose if they did not give some new insights into human salvation. This we propose to offer now, realizing that insights of one person are often difficult to apprehend by another person, or are lacking in the keen interest which the first feels. The more specific portions of the discussion, notably in the preceding chapter,

have been diagnostic in nature, and the liberty is now taken of extending the theme of diagnosis to an analogy between the health-giving aspects of groups and several aspects of healing known to be important factors in other situations. The analogy requires a move from the matter-of-fact statistics of word usage to the relationships among human beings. The thoughts which follow can be attacked from many points of view, the moreso as the reader tends to forget that only an analogy is being given-- somewhat as if St. Paul were again attempting the use of images to help man's understanding of the meaning of salvation, or of redemptive fellowship. From the author's position, the analogy is given as a contribution to other thoughts which help a person to comprehend somewhat better from his own experience what these terms mean and how communications fits into their reality. What is to be said presumes that ministers take seriously their responsibility to assist in the healing of souls, in the same sense that the physician contributes to the cure of bodily ailments-- (though in both cases it must not be forgotten that physicians treat, but it is God who heals!).

Any physician would be irresponsible if he attempted to treat a patient without first endeavoring to reach a sound diagnosis. The same can be said of a physician of souls. Promising some new state of health or wholeness without ascertaining the present state is both unwise and illusory.

Moreover, with both types of physicians, the "patient" has some apprehension of whether an attempt is sincere or perfunctory: there is a difference between hearing a lecture by a medical doctor and turning to him for treatment! The same is true of the spiritual doctor. We might recollect that diagnosis by an internist comes from his observations, a great deal from a patient's description of his own condition and critical determinations from rather specific objective measures. We suggest that clergymen seldom resort to the latter two, except in crisis cases involving counseling, in the confession practiced in some ministries, and infrequently in other ways.

The present study experience, drawn from observing the action of groups in free discussion, has dramatically brought out a similarity between serious group discussion and several forms of group therapy. This is the therapeutic, or healing, aspect of groups whose members are personally involved in helping each other-- though perhaps unconscious of such action-- to discern ever deeper into their relationships with God, with other men and with themselves. It has been noted earlier that the term "redemptive fellowship" can take on real, perhaps never-to-be-forgotten, meaning to persons who have experienced some of the deepening relationship and of the sense of participating in a fuller existence than

before. This is the first noteworthy power of groups: that of some redemption arising out of the fellowship.

A second specific analogy has also been mentioned earlier on the equivalence of some groups experiences to so-called "therapeutic regression" which is observed in hospitals to be an important factor in the healing of physical (or mental) ills.³² Wives sometimes comment what "babies" their husbands are when ill. This may be coincidentally true, but hospital experience shows that such seeming regression of a patient to an age younger than actual greatly facilitates his receptivity to ministrations, and presumably quickens his cure. The situation in group discussions, with individuals recognizing for themselves their preparedness to apprehend the message about salvation, seems to have been a recognition by participants that their understanding of the church's teaching is limited, and that help can be obtained from other persons and also imparted to others. Indeed, it must take that course! There appeared repeatedly in this study what seemed to be combined a willingness to learn and the initiation of some "cure" which can realistically be called therapy, or wholeness, or salvation.

³²Harry Guntrip, Healing the Sick Mind (New York: Appleton-Century, 1964), p. 137.

The third major observation will probably draw critical fire from many readers, but must be added in loyalty to what a number of groups have taught the author in this study and in a decade of preceding work with children and adults in Christian education. This observation pertains to some of the reasons why adults reach out for the gospel message. Countless reasons could be given by persons who have sought this message. One biblical explanation comes from Paul's address to the intelligentsia in Athens: "He [God] made from one very nation of men to live on all the face of the earth . . . that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us." (Acts 17:26-27) This explanation is perhaps the best. Protestantism's present view of man as a miserable sinner needful of redemption has found listening ears and hearts. The harsh problems of living also draw men together in all eras. And in the context of church life, we would add another reason: simply that many persons seem to have attained adulthood without comprehending what the church has been attempting to say. On the one hand is a recognition that something important is surely involved (after all, many adults recall having been "dragged" to church in their more tender years!) but the content is not understood. It is our opinion that, from an intellectual standpoint, the content of Christian teaching cannot be understood by a child.

This is too solid food! Nonetheless, many children have been subjected primarily to an intellectual presentation of the gospel message. Quite necessarily, perhaps, the youth have unconsciously withdrawn from a course of shallow assent as a means of protecting their integrity, to await some future opportunity to understand. An analogy might be found in the development of human personality, and we venture to quote from others' experience in the treatment of psychoses, where causes and results stand out most starkly:

"even in psychosis there is a healthy part of the personality watching over the whole process [of personality development] . . . when an infant cannot find the right environment in which his personality could develop properly, he puts his true self in cold storage to await a more favorable opportunity of psychological rebirth."³³

As extreme as the suggestion might be, some consideration needs to be given to the possibility that the rebirth which our Lord taught as fundamental to salvation finds its greatest opportunity-- perhaps the only sustained way-- in the healing fellowship with other people.

Perhaps the analogy is already overdrawn, but even so it is now extended to observe that in physical illness a perfect diagnosis and a good start in treatment do not insure physical healing-- nor, we presume, healing of the soul. A "healing environment" is also required: the

³³Guntrip, op. cit., p. 136.

equivalent of a hospital's medication or surgery as needed; proper rest and diet; adherence to corrective discipline; often therapeutic personalities. This is the role shared among the church, the community and the home. If we consider only the church for the moment, we will do well to consider the place of other persons in the healing of an individual. The New Testament is explicit on this point: God has delegated men as his agents in the healing; the Holy Spirit of God heals; the Holy Spirit is among his people. And where the Spirit is, there is freedom-- not to avoid responsibility, but to accept it by truly responding to a call made more distinct. But if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who shall get ready for battle? (I Corinthians 14:8)

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

TABLE I

A LISTING OF PARISHES AND CHAPLAINCIES WHICH
CONTRIBUTED TO THE EVALUATION OF WORDS

Notes:

- (a) Data for Massachusetts from 1964 official diocesan convention report, Diocese of Massachusetts.
- (b) Data for New Jersey from 1965 official diocesan convention report, Diocese of Newark.
- (c) Exact numbers of participants not given, to maintain anonymity of contributors to Appendix C.

1. Groups Participating in Detailed Discussions

- a) Bedford, Mass.: St. Paul's Episcopal Church; 604 baptized members; 123 communicants; suburban community. (The laymen and vicar of this mission provided much of the early assistance.)

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| More than 10 participating adults | |
| Fewer than 10 | " high school students |
| 1 | " clergyman |
| 1 | " seminarian |

- b) Cambridge, Mass.: The Episcopal Church at Harvard University and Radcliffe College.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Fewer than 10 participating adults | |
| 2 | " clergymen |

- c) Cambridge, Mass.: The Protestant Chaplaincy at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| More than 10 participating adults | |
| 1 | " clergyman |
| 1 | " seminarian |

TABLE I (continued)

- d) Montvale, N. J.: St. Paul's Episcopal Church;
1,232 baptized members; 536 communicants;
suburban community.

More than 10 participating adults
1 " clergyman

- e) Wrentham, Mass.: Trinity Episcopal Church;
496 baptized members; 130 communicants; suburban.

Fewer than 10 participating adults
Fewer than 10 " high school students
1 " clergyman

- f) Cambridge, Mass.: Episcopal Theological School.
(Assisting in the selection of words for
evaluation, and supplying data for Table V,
Chapter V.)

4 participating clergymen
46 " seminarians

SUMMARY: 3 parishes
2 chaplaincies
1 seminary

7 groups: 5 adult
2 high school (one completing
the short form)

57 forms received of 57 supplied.

2. Groups Completing the Short Word List

- a) Boston, Mass.: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church;
unknown number of baptized members; 279 communicants;
urban community.

Fewer than 25 participating high school students

- b) Cohasset, Mass.: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church;
915 baptized members; 416 communicants; suburban
community.

Fewer than 25 participating adults

TABLE I (continued)

- c) Dorchester (Boston), Mass.: St. Mark's Episcopal Church; 350 baptized members; 165 communicants; urban community.

Fewer than 25 participating adults

- d) Fall River, Mass.: St. Mark's Episcopal Church; 825 baptized members; 487 communicants; urban community.

More than 25 participating adults
1 " clergyman

- e) Lawrence, Mass.: Grace Episcopal Church; 1,540 baptized members; 1,203 communicants; urban community.

Fewer than 25 participating adults
Fewer than 25 " high school students

- f) Mattapan (Boston), Mass.: Holy Spirit Episcopal Church; 667 baptized members; 485 communicants; urban community.

More than 25 participating adults.

- g) Sudbury, Mass.: St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church; 587 baptized members; 212 communicants; suburban community.

More than 25 participating adults
1 " clergyman

- h) Wayland, Mass.: Holy Spirit Episcopal Church; 660 baptized members; 281 communicants; suburban community.

More than 25 participating adults

- i) Westwood, Mass.: St. John's Episcopal Church; 1,002 baptized members; 502 communicants; suburban community.

Fewer than 25 participating adults

TABLE I (continued)

SUMMARY: 9 parishes

10 groups: 8 adult
2 high school

249 forms received of 950 supplied.

3. Invited Parishes Which Did Not Participate
(or which supplied fewer than five responses)

- a) Belmont, Mass.: St. Andrew's Episcopal Church; 278 baptized members; 159 communicants; urban-suburban community.
- b) Brookline, Mass.: All Saints' Episcopal Church; 450 baptized members; 324 communicants; urban community.
- c) Burlington, Mass.: St. Mark's Episcopal Church; 732 baptized members; 269 communicants; suburban community.
- d) Somerville, Mass.: St. Thomas' Episcopal Church; 290 baptized members; 184 communicants; urban community.
- e) Wallaston (Quincy), Mass.: St. Chrysostom's Episcopal Church; 362 baptized members; 507 communicants; urban community.
- f) West Roxbury (Boston), Mass.: Emmanuel Episcopal Church; 476 baptized members; 374 communicants; urban-suburban community.

SUMMARY OF ALL PARTICIPANTS CONTRIBUTING THE DATE INCLUDED

IN APPENDIX C:

12 parishes
2 chaplaincies

TABLE I (continued)

306 participants (from 1007 forms)

50 adults, long forms; 216 short forms
7 high school, long forms (only partially
reported in Appendix C); 33 short
forms
7 clergymen

APPENDIX B

TABLE II

WORDS SELECTED FOR TESTING THE VARIOUS
UNDERSTANDINGS OF ADULTS

Notes: (a) No. 1 - 111 originally selected by the author.
 (b) No. 112 - 210 added by suggestions of 30 participants.
 (c) Asterisks indicate words finally selected for detailed testing.

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| * 1. | absolution | 32. | The Epiphany |
| 2. | agnostic | * 33. | eternal life |
| * 3. | alienation | 34. | ethics |
| 4. | angels | 35. | Eucharist |
| 5. | apocalypse | 36. | evangelism |
| 6. | Apocrypha | * 37. | The Faith |
| * 7. | Ascension | 38. | The Fall |
| 8. | asceticism | * 39. | Fellowship of the Holy Ghost |
| 9. | atheist | 40. | The Final Judgment |
| * 10. | Atonement | 41. | The Fourth Gospel |
| 11. | The Baals | 42. | free will |
| 12. | Calvinistic | 43. | glory |
| 13. | casting out demons | * 44. | God |
| * 14. | charity | * 45. | God's will |
| 15. | cherubim and seraphim | * 46. | gospel |
| 16. | God's Chosen People | * 47. | grace |
| * 17. | Christian witness | * 48. | guilt |
| 18. | Christ's passion | 49. | Heaven and Hell |
| * 19. | The Church | 50. | holy |
| 20. | church doctrine | * 51. | Holy Ghost |
| 21. | The Church Fathers | 52. | hosanna |
| 22. | The Church Triumphant | 53. | humanism |
| * 23. | The Comforter | 54. | idolatry |
| * 24. | communion | 55. | IHS |
| 25. | communion of saints | * 56. | The Incarnation |
| 26. | conversion | * 57. | "in Christ" |
| * 27. | covenant | 58. | "Jesus saves" |
| 28. | The Cross | * 59. | justification by faith |
| 29. | dogma | * 60. | Kingdom of God |
| * 30. | ecumenical | * 61. | laity |
| 31. | election | | |

TABLE II (continued)

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| 62. | The Law and the Prophets | * 107. | The Holy Trinity |
| 63. | liturgy | 108. | unction |
| 64. | mammon | 109. | Vatican |
| 65. | mass | 110. | a vision |
| 66. | messiah | * 111. | worship |
| * 67. | to minister | ----- | |
| 68. | miracle | 112. | acolyte |
| 69. | monastic | 113. | adjustment |
| * 70. | morals | 114. | adoration |
| 71. | mystical | 115. | anxiety |
| 72. | myth | 116. | authority |
| * 73. | original sin | * 117. | baptism |
| 74. | Papal Infallibility | 118. | being |
| 75. | pentecostal | 119. | believe |
| * 76. | piety | 120. | Body of Christ |
| 77. | principalities and powers | 121. | catholic |
| 78. | propheying | 122. | The Christ |
| 79. | providence | * 123. | Christian education |
| 80. | Psalter | * 124. | Christianity |
| * 81. | reconciliation | 125. | The Comfortable Words |
| * 82. | redemption | * 126. | commitment |
| * 83. | redemptive fellowship | 127. | comparative religion |
| * 84. | religion | 128. | concern |
| * 85. | resurrection of the body | 129. | confession |
| * 86. | sacraments | 130. | confrontation |
| 87. | sacrifice | 131. | consecration |
| 88. | sacristy | 132. | courage |
| * 89. | salvation | 133. | creation |
| * 90. | sanctify | 134. | cult |
| 91. | saint | * 135. | death |
| 92. | Satan | 136. | decision |
| 93. | Savior | 137. | depth |
| 94. | Second Isaiah | 138. | despair |
| 95. | sectarian | * 139. | disciple(ship) |
| * 96. | secularism | * 140. | discipline |
| * 97. | sin | 141. | duty |
| * 98. | soul | 142. | ecclesiastical |
| 99. | speaking in tongues | 143. | eschatology |
| 100. | spirit (human spirit) | 144. | estrangement |
| * 101. | stewardship | 145. | existential |
| 102. | symbolism | 146. | experience |
| 103. | testament | 147. | fear of God |
| * 104. | theology | 148. | forgiveness |
| 105. | thou | | |
| 106. | Transfiguration | | |

TABLE II (continued)

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------------|--------|------------------------|
| 149. | freedom | 194. | sectarian |
| 150. | God's Holy Word | 195. | self |
| 151. | goodness | 196. | self-centered |
| 152. | ground of being | 197. | Son of God |
| * 153. | Holy Scripture | 198. | Son of Man |
| 154. | healing | 199. | thanksgiving |
| 155. | hope | 200. | tithe |
| * 156. | humility | 201. | trust |
| * 157. | inspiration | * 202. | ultimate concern |
| 158. | intercession | 203. | unity |
| 159. | "Jesus is Lord" | 204. | universal salvation |
| 160. | joy | * 205. | vocation |
| 161. | judgment | 206. | Virgin Birth |
| * 162. | justice | 207. | The Way |
| 163. | kerygma | * 208. | Word of God |
| 164. | koinonia | 209. | world |
| * 165. | language of the Church | * 210. | world, flesh and devil |
| 166. | law | | |
| 167. | life after death | | |
| 168. | Lord | | |
| * 169. | love | | |
| 170. | love of God | | |
| * 171. | materialism | | |
| 172. | maturity | | |
| 173. | mediator | | |
| * 174. | mission | | |
| 175. | nature | | |
| * 176. | New Life | | |
| * 177. | New Morality | | |
| 178. | oblation | | |
| 179. | parable | | |
| 180. | passion | | |
| 181. | peace | | |
| 182. | personal relationship | | |
| 183. | prayer | | |
| 184. | presence | | |
| 185. | priest | | |
| 186. | protestant | | |
| 187. | relevance | | |
| * 188. | religionless Christianity | | |
| * 189. | repentance | | |
| 190. | responsibility | | |
| * 191. | revelation | | |
| 192. | rights | | |
| * 193. | righteousness | | |

APPENDIX C

MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST FORM AND SUMMARY OF
PARTICIPANTS' OPINIONS

Appendix C constitutes
the remaining pages.

Right-hand pages duplicate the
test form used in the study.

Left-hand pages present the
corresponding test results.

APPENDIX C

TABLE III

DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME

"Why doesn't the Church use words we can understand?"

This question is frequently asked, perhaps sometimes by you. Your assistance is requested in taking inventory of some "stock" words and phrases, as you mark the attached sheets.

The purpose of the next few pages is: (1) to pose some words which "the Church uses" to address its members and (2) to obtain your expression about what the words mean to you. (All words have been selected from proposals made by laymen, clergymen and seminarians.)

Your opinion is being sought-- not definitions; not your thought about what you feel you should understand. Two requests are made of you:

1. Give your opinion about every word on each page;
2. Complete each page before turning to the next page.

Thank you for your help. This information will be used for a senior thesis, and you will be informed later of the outcome of this opinion survey. Your opinions will remain known only to you, and your contribution to this effort is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Douglas C. Vest

Douglas C. Vest*
Commander Hotel
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

*Seminarian,
Episcopal Theological School
Class of 1966

TABLE III (continued)

Question: Which words do you feel that you understand to your own satisfaction? (Stated another way, which words are acceptable to you in sermons, in church school classes for your age level, in discussion groups, in church bulletins, church magazines, or other verbal expressions of the Church?)

Your action: DRAW A LINE THROUGH EACH WORD WITH WHICH YOU ARE NOT COMFORTABLE.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. absolution | 24. gospel | 47. reconciliation |
| 2. alienation | 25. grace | 48. redemption |
| 3. Christ's Ascension | 26. guilt | 49. redemptive fellowship |
| 4. The Atonement | 27. holy scriptures | 50. religion |
| 5. baptism | 28. Holy Ghost | 51. religionless Christianity |
| 6. charity | 29. humility | 52. repentance |
| 7. Christianity | 30. The Incarnation | 53. resurrection of the body |
| 8. Christian education | 31. "in Christ" | 54. divine revelation |
| 9. Christian witness | 32. inspiration | 55. righteousness |
| 10. The Church | 33. justice | 56. a sacrament |
| 11. The Comforter | 34. justification by faith | 57. salvation |
| 12. commitment | 35. Kingdom of God | 58. sanctify |
| 13. communion | 36. laity | 59. secularism |
| 14. covenant | 37. language of the Church | 60. sin |
| 15. death | 38. love | 61. soul |
| 16. ecumenical | 39. materialism | 62. stewardship |
| 17. disciple | 40. to minister | 63. theology |
| 18. discipline | 41. mission | 64. The Holy Trinity |
| 19. eternal life | 42. morals | 65. ultimate concern |
| 20. faith | 43. New Life | 66. vocation |
| 21. Fellowship of the Holy Ghost | 44. New Morality | 67. Word of God |
| 22. God | 45. original sin | 68. world, flesh and devil |
| 23. God's will | 46. piety | 69. worship |

Notes: This sheet was used with all test forms (i.e., long forms containing 69 words and short forms containing 20 words--both with multiple choices of meanings.

Results of testing with this form are presented in Table IV, pages 90 and 91.

TABLE III (continued)

Question: Which words could you use in discussions with another Christian of your age, public education, family responsibilities, and work experience? (Note: "use in discussions" means a sharing of ideas on the subject, as with your husband, wife or friend; "over the back fence" or a cup of coffee; or in an informal discussion group. Rigid definition in your mind is not necessary.)

Your action: DRAW A LINE THROUGH EACH WORD WHICH YOU BELIEVE YOU CANNOT SO USE.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. absolution | 24. gospel | 47. reconciliation |
| 2. alienation | 25. grace | 48. redemption |
| 3. Christ's Ascension | 26. guilt | 49. redemptive fellowship |
| 4. The Atonement | 27. holy scriptures | 50. religion |
| 5. baptism | 28. Holy Ghost | 51. religionless Christianity |
| 6. charity | 29. humility | 52. repentance |
| 7. Christianity | 30. The Incarnation | 53. resurrection of the body |
| 8. Christian education | 31. "in Christ" | 54. divine revelation |
| 9. Christian witness | 32. inspiration | 55. righteousness |
| 10. The Church | 33. justice | 56. a sacrament |
| 11. The Comforter | 34. justification by faith | 57. salvation |
| 12. commitment | 35. Kingdom of God | 58. sanctify |
| 13. communion | 36. laity | 59. secularism |
| 14. covenant | 37. language of the Church | 60. sin |
| 15. death | 38. love | 61. soul |
| 16. ecumenical | 39. materialism | 62. stewardship |
| 17. disciple | 40. to minister | 63. theology |
| 18. discipline | 41. mission | 64. The Holy Trinity |
| 19. eternal life | 42. morals | 65. ultimate concern |
| 20. faith | 43. New Life | 66. vocation |
| 21. Fellowship of the Holy Ghost | 44. New Morality | 67. Word of God |
| 22. God | 45. original sin | 68. world, flesh and devil |
| 23. God's will | 46. piety | 69. worship |

Note: This sheet was used only with long test forms containing 69 words with multiple choices of meaning.

TABLE III (continued)

Question: Which words could you explain, to the extent of your understanding, to a non-Christian of similar age, public education, family responsibilities, and work experience? (Note: emphasis is on explaining.)

Your action: DRAW A LINE THROUGH EACH WORD WHICH YOU BELIEVE YOU CANNOT EXPLAIN.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. absolution | 24. gospel | 47. reconciliation |
| 2. alienation | 25. grace | 48. redemption |
| 3. Christ's Ascension | 26. guilt | 49. redemptive fellowship |
| 4. The Atonement | 27. holy scriptures | 50. religion |
| 5. baptism | 28. Holy Ghost | 51. religionless Christianity |
| 6. charity | 29. humility | 52. repentance |
| 7. Christianity | 30. The Incarnation | 53. resurrection of the body |
| 8. Christian education | 31. "in Christ" | 54. divine revelation |
| 9. Christian witness | 32. inspiration | 55. righteousness |
| 10. The Church | 33. justice | 56. a sacrament |
| 11. The Comforter | 34. justification by faith | 57. salvation |
| 12. commitment | 35. Kingdom of God | 58. sanctify |
| 13. communion | 36. laity | 59. secularism |
| 14. covenant | 37. language of the Church | 60. sin |
| 15. death | 38. love | 61. soul |
| 16. ecumenical | 39. materialism | 62. stewardship |
| 17. disciple | 40. to minister | 63. theology |
| 18. discipline | 41. mission | 64. The Holy Trinity |
| 19. eternal life | 42. morals | 65. ultimate concern |
| 20. faith | 43. New Life | 66. vocation |
| 21. Fellowship of the Holy Ghost | 44. New Morality | 67. Word of God |
| 22. God | 45. original sin | 68. world, flesh and devil |
| 23. God's will | 46. piety | 69. worship |

Note: This sheet was used only with long test forms containing 69 words with multiple choices of meaning.

TABLE III (continued)

Question: Which words could you explain to your child or godchild in terms the child can understand, while retaining the meaning which you think "the Church" intends for the words? (Note: "The Church" should be interpreted as whatever the expression means to you.)

Your action: DRAW A LINE THROUGH EACH WORD WHICH YOU BELIEVE YOU CANNOT EXPLAIN.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. absolution | 24. gospel | 47. reconciliation |
| 2. alienation | 25. grace | 48. redemption |
| 3. Christ's Ascension | 26. guilt | 49. redemptive fellowship |
| 4. The Atonement | 27. holy scriptures | 50. religion |
| 5. baptism | 28. Holy Ghost | 51. religionless Christianity |
| 6. charity | 29. humility | 52. repentance |
| 7. Christianity | 30. The Incarnation | 53. resurrection of the body |
| 8. Christian education | 31. "in Christ" | 54. divine revelation |
| 9. Christian witness | 32. inspiration | 55. righteousness |
| 10. The Church | 33. justice | 56. a sacrament |
| 11. The Comforter | 34. justification by faith | 57. salvation |
| 12. commitment | 35. Kingdom of God | 58. sanctify |
| 13. communion | 36. laity | 59. secularism |
| 14. covenant | 37. language of the Church | 60. sin |
| 15. death | 38. love | 61. soul |
| 16. ecumenical | 39. materialism | 62. stewardship |
| 17. disciple | 40. to minister | 63. theology |
| 18. discipline | 41. mission | 64. The Holy Trinity |
| 19. eternal life | 42. morals | 65. ultimate concern |
| 20. faith | 43. New Life | 66. vocation |
| 21. Fellowship of the Holy Ghost | 44. New Morality | 67. Word of God |
| 22. God | 45. original sin | 68. world, flesh and devil |
| 23. God's will | 46. piety | 69. worship |

Note: This sheet was used only with long test forms containing 69 words with multiple choices of meaning.

General notes on pages 152 through 173, following:

1. These pages contain all of the basic data obtained from multiple-choice opinions about the meanings of words.
2. Right-hand pages present the form used to gather opinions.
3. Left-hand pages present the summary of data obtained in the use of these forms.
4. Data appear directly opposite corresponding choices.

Notes on left-hand pages:

1. All data are reported anonymously.
2. All data are given in terms of percentages, to protect the anonymity of contributing groups.
3. Adult groups which participated in detailed discussions are listed as: A, B, C, D, and E.
4. Adult groups which utilized the short forms without detailed group discussions are listed as "f" through "m".
5. High school groups are designated as H1, H2, H3, and H4.
6. The designations for responses are as follows:

S = words "scratched" as not being understood

R = words redefined by the participants

"a" through "f" = responses to the multiple choices which bear the corresponding identifications.
7. Circled data are the responses given by eight clergymen who recorded the understandings which they hoped their parishioners would give.

EXAMPLE from page 152:

The clergyman from parish "O" indicated a preference for his parishioners to select meaning "c" for word 5 listed on page 153—i.e., baptism as "spiritual regeneration". This choice is recorded as (18), a choice given by 18 per cent of the parishioners.

TABLE III TEST RESULTS

152

| | | ADULT DISCUSANTS | | | | | ADULTS COMPLETING SHORT FORM | | | | | | | | HIGH SCHOOL | | | | OVERALL AVERAGE |
|---|---|------------------|----|----|----|----|------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------------|----|----|----|-----------------|
| | | A | B | C | D | E | f | g | h | i | j | k | l | m | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | |
| 1 | S | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| | R | 7 | 20 | 18 | 0 | 43 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 14 |
| | a | 54 | 80 | 36 | 71 | 21 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 53 |
| | b | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | c | 39 | 0 | 36 | 29 | 36 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 31 |
| 2 | S | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | a | 93 | 80 | 73 | 93 | 86 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 86 |
| | b | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| | c | 7 | 20 | 9 | 0 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 |
| 3 | S | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | a | 61 | 20 | 36 | 14 | 38 | 27 | 33 | 25 | 15 | 6 | 18 | 26 | 18 | 43 | 0 | 44 | 40 | 27 |
| | b | 4 | 40 | 0 | 15 | 19 | 14 | 12 | 4 | 19 | 7 | 19 | 7 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 9 |
| | c | 7 | 0 | 18 | 29 | 19 | 18 | 16 | 27 | 19 | 47 | 9 | 19 | 18 | 14 | 55 | 45 | 20 | 22 |
| | d | 21 | 40 | 36 | 36 | 19 | 41 | 28 | 40 | 39 | 33 | 54 | 48 | 55 | 43 | 45 | 0 | 40 | 39 |
| 4 | S | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 35 | 15 | 31 | 20 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 71 | 33 | 11 | 60 | 18 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | a | 7 | 20 | 9 | 14 | 29 | 14 | 16 | 4 | 19 | 13 | 9 | 13 | 18 | 0 | 33 | 22 | 13 | 14 |
| | b | 14 | 0 | 18 | 29 | 29 | 18 | 12 | 23 | 15 | 27 | 27 | 22 | 27 | 14 | 11 | 22 | 7 | 19 |
| | c | 50 | 80 | 73 | 57 | 28 | 50 | 28 | 46 | 31 | 40 | 55 | 54 | 37 | 15 | 23 | 22 | 20 | 43 |
| | d | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 5 |
| 5 | S | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| | R | 7 | 0 | 37 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 12 |
| | a | 50 | 80 | 27 | 85 | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 57 |
| | b | 7 | 20 | 9 | 4 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 |
| | c | 15 | 0 | 18 | 14 | 28 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 13 |
| | d | 7 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 |
| 6 | S | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | a | 79 | 60 | 82 | 72 | 86 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 77 |
| | b | 7 | 20 | 0 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 |
| | c | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | d | 14 | 20 | 9 | 21 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 15 |

EXAMPLE (see page 151)

Your action: (a) Please check one interpretation which most nearly expresses your understanding of the following words.
 OR (b) If you have a better interpretation, write it beneath the word (or words) in question.
 OR (c) If you have no understanding, draw a line through the word (or words) in question.

1. absolution

- a. ☐ priestly pronouncement that a penitent's sins are forgiven
- b. ☐ cleansing of communion vessels
- c. ☐ release from guilt by one's conscience

2. alienation

- a. ☐ separation
- b. ☐ hostility
- c. ☐ loneliness

*3. Christ's Ascension

- a. ☐ Christ's bodily rising to Heaven
- b. ☐ " disappearance from human vision
- c. ☐ " elevation in honor and power as Lord of men
- d. ☐ " exaltation to the right hand of God

*4. The Atonement

- a. ☐ the At-one-ment of God and man
- b. ☐ reconciliation of God and man
- c. ☐ Christ's propitiation for our sins
- d. ☐ re-establishment of friendship with God

5. baptism

- a. ☐ sacramental initiation into the Christian Church
- b. ☐ the mystical removal of one's sins
- c. ☐ spiritual regeneration
- d. ☐ ceremonial immersion in holy water

6. charity

- a. ☐ Christian love
- b. ☐ virtue which comes from God
- c. ☐ Christian almsgiving
- d. ☐ the neighborly relief of needy persons

* Words marked with asterisks were used in an abbreviated form containing 20 words.

TABLE III TEST RESULTS

| ADULT DISCUSSANTS | | | | | | ADULTS COMPLETING SHORT FORMS | | | | | | | | | | HIGH SCHOOL | | | | OVERALL AVERAGE |
|-------------------|----|----|----|-----|-----|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------------|----|----|----|-----------------|
| | | A | B | C | D | E | f | g | h | i | j | k | l | m | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | | |
| 7 | S | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | |
| | R | 14 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | |
| | a | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| | b | 65 | 40 | 82 | 100 | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 73 | |
| | c | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| | d | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | |
| e | 7 | 20 | 18 | 0 | 22 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 11 | | |
| *8 | S | 7 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 12 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 29 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 4 | |
| | R | 14 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 2 | |
| | a | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 16 | 0 | 11 | 27 | 9 | 5 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 6 | 7 | |
| | b | 50 | 50 | 36 | 53 | 72 | 36 | 19 | 35 | 27 | 36 | 18 | 35 | 27 | 14 | 11 | 45 | 13 | 33 | |
| | c | 22 | 30 | 41 | 43 | 14 | 59 | 53 | 61 | 58 | 37 | 73 | 60 | 64 | 43 | 74 | 41 | 74 | 54 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | S | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| | a | 86 | 80 | 100 | 72 | 86 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 84 | |
| | b | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| | c | 7 | 20 | 0 | 21 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10 | |
| | d | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| 10 | S | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 1 | |
| | a | 36 | 25 | 45 | 29 | 14 | 32 | 16 | 4 | 8 | 46 | 55 | 19 | 37 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 18 | |
| | b | 21 | 25 | 36 | 14 | 36 | 31 | 15 | 27 | 19 | 40 | 9 | 28 | 0 | 15 | 45 | 11 | 13 | 24 | |
| | c | 7 | 25 | 19 | 43 | 36 | 0 | 35 | 42 | 15 | 7 | 9 | 23 | 27 | 14 | 33 | 11 | 14 | 22 | |
| | d | 7 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 22 | 15 | 42 | 0 | 18 | 14 | 27 | 14 | 22 | 45 | 27 | 19 | |
| e | 29 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 14 | 23 | 9 | 12 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 29 | 0 | 33 | 26 | 14 | | |
| 11 | S | 36 | 20 | 55 | 15 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 29 | |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| | a | 14 | 20 | 18 | 50 | 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 26 | |
| | b | 50 | 60 | 18 | 35 | 71 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 43 | |
| | c | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | S | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| | R | 0 | 20 | 18 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | |
| | a | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| | b | 93 | 80 | 82 | 93 | 100 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 90 | |
| | c | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | S | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| | a | 18 | 0 | 45 | 7 | 22 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 20 | |
| | b | 32 | 60 | 46 | 57 | 35 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 45 | |
| | c | 7 | 20 | 0 | 14 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | |
| | d | 36 | 20 | 9 | 22 | 43 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 25 | |

*8 d 7 0 5 4 0

7. Christianity

- a. ☐ beliefs and rituals established by Jesus Christ
- b. ☐ religion based on the life, teachings and death of Jesus Christ
- c. ☐ Christendom
- d. ☐ all persons who believe in the New Testament
- e. ☐ practical conformity of one's life to the Christian religion

*8. Christian education

- a. ☐ teaching Christians what they should believe
- b. ☐ teaching persons to think as responsible Christians
- c. ☐ guidance in personal relationships with God, Church and others

9. Christian witness

- a. ☐ setting a Christian example in words and deeds
- b. ☐ eyewitnessing what goes on in the Church
- c. ☐ stating one's personal Christian testimony
- d. ☐ one who furnishes proof of a Christian marriage

*10. The Church

- a. ☐ the world-wide group among whom the Holy Spirit works
- b. ☐ the Body of Christ
- c. ☐ the baptized community accepting Christ's gospel and the Holy Spirit
- d. ☐ a place for the worship of God
- e. ☐ the organization of Christianity

11. The Comforter

- a. ☐ Jesus, the Good Shepherd
- b. ☐ the Holy Spirit
- c. ☐ Holy Communion

12. commitment

- a. ☐ burial
- b. ☐ dedication to a cause
- c. ☐ confinement under restraint

13. communion

- a. ☐ a shared action or situation
- b. ☐ the Eucharist
- c. ☐ persons bound in a religious discipline
- d. ☐ fellowship

8 d. ☐ the layman's side of theology

(inadvertently omitted from the short form)

14. covenant

- a. _____ testament
- b. _____ an agreement between God and individual man
- c. _____ a solemn agreement between two parties
- d. _____ promises of God as revealed in scriptures

15. death

- a. _____ non-being
- b. _____ the wages of sin
- c. _____ the body's loss of mind and spirit
- d. _____ passing away
- e. _____ the fate of all nonbelievers

16. ecumenical

- a. _____ involving the whole inhabited world
- b. _____ all Christian denominations
- c. _____ all religions

17. disciple

- a. _____ apostle
- b. _____ one who obeys rules
- c. _____ pupil or follower

18. discipline

- a. _____ mild punishment
- b. _____ regimentation
- c. _____ a set of rules and regulations
- d. _____ training that corrects and strengthens

*19. eternal life

- a. _____ life that goes on forever
- b. _____ immortality of the soul
- c. _____ our continuation in the memories of others
- d. _____ what comes after the resurrection of the body
- e. _____ change from an old to a new manner of living our lives

20. faith

- a. _____ unquestioning trust in God
- b. _____ confidence in God's love and assistance
- c. _____ the means of salvation
- d. _____ belief in Christian doctrines
- e. _____ human response to divine truth

TABLE III TEST RESULTS

| ADULT DISCASSANTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ADULTS COMPLETING SHOOT FORMS | | | | HIGH SCHOOL | | | | OVERALL AVERAGE |
|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------|--|--|--|--------------------|
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[illegible]

*21. Fellowship of the Holy Ghost

- a. _____ union of the Holy Ghost with God the Father and the Son
- b. _____ Communion of Saints
- c. _____ the love of God in the Christian community
- d. _____ the Church
- e. _____ the expression of God in a group

22. God

- a. _____ the divine creator and maintainer of the universe
- b. _____ the ground of being
- c. _____ the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
- d. _____ the supreme reality
- e. _____ the Christian divinity
- f. _____ creator, redeemer, and sanctifier of all mankind

23. God's will

- a. _____ God's purpose for the world
- b. _____ what God wants done in the world
- c. _____ explanation of senseless human tragedies
- d. _____ resignation to God's ways

24. gospel

- a. _____ the good news
- b. _____ the truth
- c. _____ the salvation announced by Jesus Christ
- d. _____ one of the early books in the New Testament

*25. grace

- a. _____ reprieve, or permitted delay
- b. _____ a quality pleasing to God
- c. _____ the unearned favor of God
- d. _____ God's personal attitude and action toward men
- e. _____ religious savoir faire

*26. guilt

- a. _____ grounds for just punishment
- b. _____ remorse for sin
- c. _____ human anxiety about sin
- d. _____ responsibility for sin

TABLE III TEST RESULTS

| | | ADULT DISCUSSANTS | | | | | ADULTS COMPLETING SHORT FORMS | | | | | | | | | | HIGH SCHOOL | | | | OVERALL AVERAGE |
|----|---|-------------------|----|-----|----|-----|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------------|----|----|--|--------------------|
| | | A | B | C | D | E | f | g | h | i | j | k | l | m | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | | | |
| 27 | S | 7 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | |
| | R | 14 | 20 | 0 | 7 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10 | | |
| | a | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | | |
| | b | 7 | 20 | 18 | 29 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 17 | | |
| | c | 54 | 60 | 73 | 43 | 21 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 51 | | |
| | d | 18 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 36 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 16 | | |
| 28 | S | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | |
| | R | 7 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | | |
| | a | 18 | 10 | 9 | 0 | 24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 11 | | |
| | b | 18 | 40 | 27 | 29 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 23 | | |
| | c | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | | |
| | d | 50 | 50 | 64 | 57 | 45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 54 | | |
| 29 | S | 7 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | | |
| | a | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | |
| | b | 71 | 60 | 100 | 93 | 100 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 86 | | |
| | c | 0 | 20 | 0 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | |
| | d | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | | |
| 30 | S | 29 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 12 | 19 | 13 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 57 | 22 | 0 | 13 | 11 | | |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | | |
| | a | 71 | 50 | 77 | 86 | 100 | 86 | 66 | 72 | 61 | 37 | 64 | 86 | 55 | 14 | 67 | 56 | 60 | 73 | | |
| | b | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 2 | | |
| | c | 0 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 18 | 3 | 37 | 14 | 11 | 11 | 13 | 6 | | |
| | d | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 8 | 12 | 0 | 18 | 7 | 9 | 15 | 0 | 22 | 14 | 7 | | |
| 31 | S | 50 | 60 | 37 | 14 | 43 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 37 | | |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | |
| | a | 0 | 20 | 18 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | | |
| | b | 36 | 0 | 27 | 71 | 43 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 41 | | |
| | c | 14 | 20 | 9 | 8 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 12 | | |
| 32 | S | 14 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | |
| | R | 7 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | |
| | a | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 | | |
| | b | 25 | 60 | 45 | 64 | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 47 | | |
| | c | 36 | 40 | 37 | 29 | 28 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 33 | | |
| | d | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 | | |
| 33 | S | 7 | 20 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | | |
| | R | 7 | 0 | 9 | 7 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| | a | 0 | 20 | 9 | 7 | 0 | 9 | 31 | 4 | 19 | 7 | 36 | 21 | 9 | 14 | 14 | 22 | 7 | 16 | | |
| | b | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | | |
| | c | 22 | 0 | 9 | 7 | 29 | 32 | 54 | 20 | 15 | 40 | 27 | 14 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 33 | 7 | 21 | | |
| | d | 64 | 60 | 64 | 79 | 57 | 59 | 0 | 76 | 58 | 46 | 37 | 65 | 77 | 57 | 56 | 45 | 86 | 60 | | |

27. holy scriptures
- a. ☐ books written at God's command
 - b. ☐ any sacred writings
 - c. ☐ books written under God's inspiration
 - d. ☐ writings selected under God's inspiration
28. Holy Ghost
- a. ☐ another name for the Holy Spirit
 - b. ☐ the Third Person of the Holy Trinity
 - c. ☐ the unseen person in church
 - d. ☐ God as present and active in human spiritual experience
29. humility
- a. ☐ childlike simplicity
 - b. ☐ proper sense of one's own significance
 - c. ☐ courteous respect
 - d. ☐ passive resistance
- *30. The Incarnation
- a. ☐ God's becoming man in Jesus Christ
 - b. ☐ Christmas
 - c. ☐ the Eternal God taking flesh from his human mother
 - d. ☐ coming of the Christian God, Jesus Christ
31. "in Christ"
- a. ☐ a faithful member of the Church
 - b. ☐ having the present action of the Holy Spirit in one's heart
 - c. ☐ mystical absorption in Christ's body, the Church
32. inspiration
- a. ☐ coming of excessive animation or knowledge
 - b. ☐ coming of unexplained ideas, enlightenment
 - c. ☐ direct divine influence on the mind or soul of man
 - d. ☐ in-spirit-ing
- *33. justice
- a. ☐ lawfulness
 - b. ☐ an eye for an eye; no more, no less
 - c. ☐ love at work in the world
 - d. ☐ the moral principle determining fair conduct

[illegible]

34. justification by faith

- a. ☐ defense of a person by his faith in God
- b. ☐ proof of one's righteousness by his faith in God
- c. ☐ being considered righteous by our faith in God
- d. ☐ being considered righteous by God's faith in us

*35. Kingdom of God

- a. ☐ Heaven
- b. ☐ the rule of God now
- c. ☐ the present world made more perfect in the future
- d. ☐ the spiritual realm over which God rules

36. laity

- a. ☐ nonprofessionals in any field
- b. ☐ the main body of Church members, excluding clergy
- c. ☐ adult Church members

37. language of the Church

- a. ☐ theological words, as opposed to words of the workaday world
- b. ☐ whatever the Church says or writes
- c. ☐ words which the Church leaders emphasize
- d. ☐ all words coming from the long tradition of Bible and Church

38. love

- a. ☐ concern for neighbors
- b. ☐ divine liking
- c. ☐ strong affection
- d. ☐ God

39. materialism

- a. ☐ nonspiritual objects of attraction
- b. ☐ wealth
- c. ☐ preoccupation with acquiring things
- d. ☐ things

40. to minister

- a. ☐ to perform spiritual functions of the Church
- b. ☐ to heal
- c. ☐ to serve

[illegible]

41. mission

- a. ☐ an assignment
- b. ☐ a ministry in humanitarian work
- c. ☐ a small church
- d. ☐ a continuing task which one is called to undertake

42. morals

- a. ☐ suppressed passions
- b. ☐ ethics
- c. ☐ conduct
- d. ☐ principles of personal goodness

43. New Life

- a. ☐ Christian living
- b. ☐ a second chance
- c. ☐ God's life imparted to us
- d. ☐ lives in which we can sin bravely

44. New Morality

- a. ☐ promiscuity
- b. ☐ Old Immorality
- c. ☐ responsible, personal exercise of conscience
- d. ☐ actions based on sincere motives
- e. ☐ right action apart from outward laws

45. original sin

- a. ☐ human tendency toward self-centeredness and evil
- b. ☐ the first sin after one's baptism
- c. ☐ Adam's disobedience
- d. ☐ sin inherited from Adam

46. piety

- a. ☐ regard for religious observations
- b. ☐ sanctimoniousness
- c. ☐ hypocrisy

47. reconciliation

- a. ☐ "making up"
- b. ☐ making consistent
- c. ☐ submitting to the inevitable
- d. ☐ restoration of personal relationships

TABLE III TEST RESULTS

| | | ADULT DISCUSSIONS | | | | | ADULTS COMPLETING SHORT FORMS | | | | | | | | HIGH SCHOOL | | | | OVERALL AVERAGE |
|----|---|-------------------|------|------|------|------|-------------------------------|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|-------------|------|----|----|-----------------|
| | | A | B | C | D | E | f | g | h | i | j | k | l | m | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | |
| 48 | S | 31 | 20 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 26 | 4 | 27 | 20 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 11 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | a | 8 | 0 | 9 | (22) | 0 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 8 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 20 | 9 |
| | b | 38 | (80) | (73) | 64 | (86) | 68 | 52 | 64 | (50) | 73 | 55 | 63 | 28 | (42) | (83) | 67 | 47 | 60 |
| | c | (8) | 0 | 0 | 7 | 14 | 9 | 3 | 12 | 19 | 7 | 18 | 19 | 36 | 14 | 17 | 22 | 6 | 13 |
| | d | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 9 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 7 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 7 |
| 49 | S | 46 | 60 | 45 | 71 | 28 | 32 | 34 | 40 | 38 | 40 | 9 | 41 | 36 | 57 | 83 | 33 | 67 | 42 |
| | R | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | a | 16 | 20 | (18) | (8) | 15 | 27 | 25 | 24 | 31 | 20 | 55 | 21 | 46 | 29 | 11 | 34 | 20 | 24 |
| | b | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 18 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 3 |
| | c | (38) | (0) | 37 | 21 | (43) | 36 | 25 | 32 | (27) | 33 | 18 | 37 | 18 | (14) | (6) | 22 | 13 | 30 |
| 50 | S | 8 | 20 | 0 | 7 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 |
| | R | 15 | 0 | (18) | (14) | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 12 |
| | a | 23 | 20 | 19 | 7 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 20 |
| | b | 23 | 60 | 18 | 50 | (14) | | | | | | | | | | | | | 32 |
| | c | 8 | 0 | 9 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 |
| | d | 23 | 0 | 36 | 15 | 28 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 22 |
| 51 | S | 38 | 80 | 73 | (50) | 28 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 52 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | (9) | 21 | (0) | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 |
| | a | 8 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 |
| | b | 15 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 |
| | c | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| | d | (24) | (20) | 9 | 22 | 65 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 25 |
| 52 | S | 8 | 20 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 16 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 29 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 5 |
| | R | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | a | 31 | 0 | 18 | 29 | 8 | 23 | 37 | 19 | (42) | 20 | 27 | 27 | 55 | 71 | 55 | 33 | 67 | 32 |
| | b | (11) | (20) | 5 | 14 | 16 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 0 | (22) | 11 | 20 | 10 |
| | c | 27 | 60 | (50) | (50) | (68) | 54 | 19 | 42 | 31 | 67 | 18 | 45 | 9 | (0) | 0 | 11 | 13 | 36 |
| | d | 8 | 0 | 18 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 19 | 27 | 11 | 6 | 46 | 19 | 36 | 0 | 23 | 23 | 0 | 16 |
| 53 | S | (31) | 0 | 18 | 22 | 28 | 5 | 12 | 8 | 19 | 13 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 11 | 7 | 22 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | (0) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | a | 23 | 40 | 9 | (21) | 28 | 27 | 28 | 27 | 11 | 54 | 27 | 29 | 36 | (57) | 56 | 22 | 13 | 22 |
| | b | 15 | 40 | 18 | 21 | 37 | 59 | 41 | 23 | 46 | 23 | 46 | 29 | 55 | 29 | 22 | 0 | 53 | 23 |
| | c | 23 | (0) | (27) | 29 | 7 | 9 | 13 | 27 | 12 | 0 | 9 | 19 | 0 | 0 | (11) | 33 | 20 | 21 |
| | d | 8 | 20 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 15 | (8) | 10 | 18 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 11 | 34 | 7 | 10 |
| 54 | S | 38 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 35 | 8 | 15 | 13 | 27 | 6 | 27 | 71 | 0 | 11 | 40 | 17 |
| | R | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | a | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 9 | 27 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 44 | 0 | 5 |
| | b | (23) | (40) | 64 | 43 | (36) | 27 | 22 | 23 | 27 | 40 | 28 | 45 | 55 | (29) | (67) | 23 | 7 | 36 |
| | c | 39 | 40 | (27) | (50) | 57 | 45 | 34 | 27 | (35) | 47 | 36 | 43 | 18 | 0 | 22 | 11 | 53 | 37 |
| | d | 0 | 0 | 9 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 15 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 5 |

*48. redemption

- a. ☐ removal of obligation by means of a payment
- b. ☐ release from sin's bondage by Christ's death
- c. ☐ atonement
- d. ☐ exoneration

*49. redemptive fellowship

- a. ☐ deliverance from sin, by the Church
- b. ☐ group dynamics
- c. ☐ healing action by the Church or other groups

50. religion

- a. ☐ a worshipping organization
- b. ☐ belief in a God
- c. ☐ belief in one God
- d. ☐ search for the ideal life

51. religionless Christianity

- a. ☐ Christianity without worship
- b. ☐ Christianity outside the Church
- c. ☐ religion based on Christ, but not on God
- d. ☐ Christianity concerned with its mission, not with rituals

*52. repentance

- a. ☐ regret about sin
- b. ☐ amendment of life
- c. ☐ contrition plus pursuit of a worthy life
- d. ☐ spiritual awakening

*53. resurrection of the body

- a. ☐ regeneration of the person into a spiritual being
- b. ☐ release of the soul from the body
- c. ☐ rising from death to a superior personal state
- d. ☐ rising at the last day

*54. divine revelation

- a. ☐ a book of the Bible
- b. ☐ God's disclosure of himself
- c. ☐ disclosure or communication of divine truth
- d. ☐ a startling act of God

55. righteousness

- a. ☐ conformity to the divine expectation
- b. ☐ a right relationship to God
- c. ☐ holiness
- d. ☐ justification

56. a sacrament

- a. ☐ outward and God-given sign of inward and spiritual grace
- b. ☐ Holy Communion or baptism
- c. ☐ a religious act or practice which symbolizes a deeper reality
- d. ☐ a spiritual sign

*57. salvation

- a. ☐ the process of being saved
- b. ☐ divine redemption from damnation
- c. ☐ rescue from the power and effects of sin
- d. ☐ being made whole

*58. sanctify

- a. ☐ to make free from sin
- b. ☐ to move from harm's way
- c. ☐ to make holy or pious
- d. ☐ to enable growth in God's grace

59. secularism

- a. ☐ worldliness
- b. ☐ a view of life which ignores religion
- c. ☐ exclusion of religious principles from everyday life
- d. ☐ religionlessness

*60. sin

- a. ☐ disobedience to the known will of God
- b. ☐ disobedience to conscience
- c. ☐ breaking the Ten Commandments or the Golden Rule
- d. ☐ separation from God
- e. ☐ guilt

61. soul

- a. ☐ indestructable part of man
- b. ☐ basic difference between man and beast
- c. ☐ actuating cause of individual life
- d. ☐ spirit

| ADULT DISSENTANCE | ADULT COMPLIANCE | HIGH SCHOOL | OVERALL AVERAGE |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | | | |

[illegible]

*62. stewardship

- a. _____ the business side of religion
- b. _____ tithing
- c. _____ service to God
- d. _____ responsible handling of goods or self

63. theology

- a. _____ the theoretical side of religion
- b. _____ rational interpretation of religious faith, practice and experience
- c. _____ a system for understanding God

64. The Holy Trinity

- a. _____ Jesus, Mary and Joseph
- b. _____ the unity of three Persons in one Godhead
- c. _____ Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier
- d. _____ a theological expression about God's personality

65. ultimate concern

- a. _____ the most remote issues in life
- b. _____ the fundamental issues which God is trying to teach us
- c. _____ the basic purpose of human life

66. vocation

- a. _____ God's summon to undertake certain tasks and functions
- b. _____ inclination to a particular type of work
- c. _____ whatever work we do

67. Word of God

- a. _____ The Bible
- b. _____ Jesus Christ
- c. _____ the Bible and what is preached by duly ordained persons
- d. _____ all teachings inspired by God

68. world, flesh and devil

- a. _____ corruption outside the Church
- b. _____ wealth, lust and Satan
- c. _____ self-centered pursuit of the nonspiritual
- d. _____ temptations
- e. _____ fun

TABLE III TEST RESULTS

| | | | | | | | | | | HIGH SCHOOL | | | | OVERALL AVERAGE |
|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------------|----|----|----|--------------------|
| ADULT DISCUSSANTS | | | | | | | | | | I1 | I2 | I3 | I4 | |
| ADULTS COMPLETING SHORT FORMS | | | | | | | | | | J | K | L | M | |
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | | | | | |
| 69 S | 23 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | 6 |
| R | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | 6 |
| a | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | 0 |
| b | 54 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | 62 |
| c | 15 | 40 | 36 | 29 | 15 | 71 | 71 | 71 | 71 | | | | | 26 |

69. worship

- a. _____ making oneself worthy to address God
- b. _____ expression of veneration to God
- c. _____ form of religious practice

Please add any remarks which you wish to make.

Finally.....

Write in this box any number, word or sign which you can use later to identify which answer sheet is yours. (Only you are to know who has supplied these opinions .)

Thanks again.

DCV

